DH
DECCAN HERALD
The Power of Good

India beat NZ by 8 wickets in 3rd T20I, clinch series

Inspired bowling and a 14-ball fifty by Abhishek Sharma aid win

Page 13

PADMA VIBHUSHAN

Dharmendra
Actor

V S Achuthanandan
Former Kerala CM

KT Thomas
Former SC judge

N Rajam, Hindustani classical musician & violinist

P Narayanan
Author and journalist

Poll-bound states top list of Padma awards

3 Malayalis get 2nd highest civilian honour; 13 from TN on list of awardees

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Former Kerala Chief Minister VS Achuthanandan, Kerala OBC leader Vellappally Natesan and actor Mammootty were among 131 Padma awardees announced on the eve of Republic Day on Sunday, a list that was immediately read as one made with an eye on Kerala elections.

Among poll-bound states, Tamil Nadu has the highest number of Padma awardees (13), followed by West Bengal (11), Kerala (8), Assam (5) and Puducherry (1). These five represent close to one-fourth of the Padma awards announced.

CPM's towering late leader Achuthanandan, former Supreme Court judge Justice KT Thomas, and author and former editor of BJP's Malayalam mouthpiece P Narayanan—all Malayalis — were chosen for Padma Vibhushan, the second highest civilian award, along with late actor Dharmendra and Hindustani violinist N Rajam, a Tamil.

One of the highlights is the posthumous recognition of Achuthanandan, who was a fierce critic of the Sangh Parivar, that could put the CPM in a spot. While his family has welcomed the award, former West Bengal CM Buddhadeb Bhattacharya declined it in 2022.

Achuthanandan's son Arun Kumar said it is a "big honour" while insisting that he is not aware of party veterans EMS Namboodiripad and Bhattacharya declining it.

For Padma Bhushan, Mammootty, considered to be a Left sympathiser, and Natesan, who leads the Ezhava outfit SNDP, are on the list, which also includes former Jharkhand CM late Shibu Soren.

▸ Padma, Page 3A
Related reports, Page 5A
Ashoka Chakra for space hero, Page 5A

8 names from Karnataka

The Padma awardees include eight prominent persons from Karnataka. Polyglot Shatavadhani R Ganesh, educationist Prabhakar B Kore, Suresh Hanagavadi and late TT Jagannathan, among others are on the list.
Details on Page 3C

Voting reflects faith in elections: Prez

Emphasising that voting is "not merely a political expression" but reflects citizens' faith in the democratic process of elections, President Droupadi Murmu said the right to vote gives concrete expression to constitutional ideals of justice and equality.
Details on Page 5B

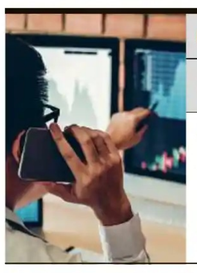
Nimhans team pulls man out of 'stock trading addiction'

DH EXCLUSIVE

ASHWIN B M
BENGALURU, DHNS

In a first-of-its-kind case, researchers at Bengaluru's Nimhans have successfully treated a 29-year-old man for severe "stock trading addiction", revealing a new and dangerous trend that is taking hold of India's youth.

With mobile apps transforming the trading floor into a digital casino, the adrenaline of Intraday and Futures & Options (F&O) trading is increasingly morphing into a clinical disorder, say researchers.



CURIOUS CASE OF MR. D

- 29-year-old man starts looking for secondary income through trading apps
- The man transitions from small investments to high-risk Intraday and Futures & Options (F&O) trading
- Soon, he starts spending hours monitoring market movements and experiences severe anxiety outside trading hours

Subramanian Saradha, Rajesh Kumar, and Manoj K Sharma of the Services for Healthy Use of Technology (SHUT Clinic) probed the case, which proves that compulsive trading is no longer just a financial risk but a treatable mental health disorder.

By adapting methods used for gaming addiction, the team helped the patient recover from a state of total loss of control and debt. Researchers warn that with nearly 75% of new demat accounts being opened by those under 30 years, the city is facing a quiet epidemic of behavioural addiction masked as investment.

▸ Nimhans, Page 3A

Gold prices set for 30% upside this year, say analysts

Geopolitical policy uncertainty likely to aid surge

HRITHIK KIRAN BAGADE
BENGALURU, DHNS

Gold prices, which have seen recurring record highs in recent trading sessions, are expected to continue their upward trend this year.

Macroeconomic and geopolitical factors provide strong support for gold, with domestic prices likely to hover above Rs 1,65,000 and potentially settle around Rs 1,80,000 per 10 gm, about 30% higher over the 2025 closing, in the coming months, say analysts.

On January 23, gold jumped Rs 1,500 to close at a record Rs 1,58,700 per 10 gm in Delhi, amid strong global trends and stockist buying.

It gained momentum through 2025, closing at Rs 1,38,000 per 10 gm, showing a growth of 80% over Rs 76,748 in 2024, according to data available with Refinitiv and Angel One Research.

International prices rose over 6% this year after a 60-70% gain in 2025, according to the World Gold Council.

Record run continues amid global uncertainty

PRICE MOMENTUM

₹76,748* 2024
₹1,38,000* 2025 close
+80% YoY

Up to ₹1,80,000* 2026 (estimate) *Price per 10g

INDIA ANGLE

86% view gold as a wealth-creation tool
56% see jewellery as investment + fashion

Weddings & festivals ensure steady demand

Analysts attribute the rally to uncertainty and the reliance on safe-haven assets. "The momentum and global chaos suggest the rally is likely to continue for at least six months," Prathamesh Mallya, DVP — Research, Non-Agri Commodities and Currencies, Angel One told *DH*.

▸ Gold price, Page 3A

Maha SIT arrests six persons in alleged Rs 400-cr heist case

MUMBAI, DHNS: Six persons have been arrested in a kidnapping case linked to the alleged heist of demonetised Rs 2,000 currency notes valued at around Rs 400 crore.

With many questions still unanswered in the case that allegedly occurred in October last year, the Special Investigation Team (SIT) has widened its investigation into the murky affair that has sucked in police from the states of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Goa.

Maharashtra police, which set up the SIT in January this year, is coordinating with their counterparts in Karnataka and Goa to take the case ahead.

A total of six persons — Jayesh Kadam, Vishal Naidu, Sunil Dhumal, Virat Gandhi, Janardan Dhaygude and Sayyed Azhar — have been arrested so far in the case.

Virat is a hawala operator based in Ahmedabad, according to Nashik rural police. All the arrests happened in January.

▸ Heist, Page 3A

INDIA CHRONICLER P 5A

Journalist Mark Tully passes away

Veteran journalist Mark Tully, a chronicler of India and an acclaimed author, passed away at a private hospital in New Delhi on Sunday after suffering multi-organ failure, hospital authorities said. He was 90. The award-winning journalist was ailing for some time. Born in Calcutta (now Kolkata) on October 24, 1935, Tully was the chief of bureau for the BBC, New Delhi, for 22 years.

FUTURE GROWTH P 4

Mobility grid in all cities: Shivakumar

Back from his visit to the World Economic Forum in Davos, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Sunday hailed Switzerland 'as heaven' and stated that the government would work towards developing a mobility grid in all cities of Karnataka by keeping in mind a horizon of 25 years. He said a meeting of Urban Development, Revenue and Panchayat Raj ministers would be called to formalise it.

T20 WORLD CUP P 13

Participation subject to govt advice: Naqvi

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Mohsin Naqvi on Sunday dismissed the impression that the announcement of the World Cup squad meant that the country has decided to take part in next month's ICC mega event. Naqvi reiterated his earlier stand that the PCB has been waiting to know the Pakistan government's stand to take a call on the nation's participation in the T20 World Cup.

Better Life For All
Better Opportunities For All

Inspired by the Constitution

Guided by Gandhian Ideals

On this **Republic Day**, we reaffirm our faith in the Constitution of India, a solemn promise of **Justice**, **Equality**, and **Dignity** for every citizen.

The **Guarantee Sarkara** stands rooted in **Mahatma Gandhiji's vision** of an inclusive India, where governance is compassionate and the State stands with the weakest first.

Happy 77th Republic Day

Shakthi · Anna Bhagya · Gruha Jyothi · Gruha Lakshmi · Yuva Nidhi

"To protect and respect our vibrant culture and tradition," is a Fundamental Duty of every citizen. This is affirmed by our Constitution.

CMofKarnataka https://dipr.karnataka.gov.in/
karnataka information

Inmates prepare snacks for R-Day event

BENGALURU, DHNS: Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot and other dignitaries attending the Republic Day celebrations at the Field Marshal Manekshaw Parade Ground on Monday will be served light refreshments prepared by inmates of the Central Prison, Parappana Agrahara.

Alok Kumar

Under the Nava Sankalpa programme, snacks prepared at the prison bakery will be served to dignitaries as well as journalists attending the event.

Special items, including biscuits and bread, have been prepared, a senior prison official said.

"Food experts from Hyderabad trained the prisoners for 10 days. The bakery items were prepared by the inmates under the supervision of these experts. A total of 700 food packets have been prepared," Director General of Police (Prisons and Correctional Services) Alok Kumar told *DH*.

Month after agro tag, KIADB renews land push in Devanahalli

Farmers dub the move 'mockery of rules'

NAVEEN MENEZES
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) is making a fresh attempt to persuade affected Devanahalli farmers to part with their land, giving them three months to decide.

This move comes just over a month after the state government re-notified about 1,777 acres — originally earmarked for the aerospace park — as a "permanent special agricultural zone".

Farmers, who staged a four-year protest against the original notification, have called the KIADB's offer "intimidation and a mockery of rules and regulations".

In a public notice on January 23, the KIADB asked interested landowners to meet the Special Land Acquisition Officer (SLAO) on Nrupathunga Road between February 1 and April 30.

The notice stated the board would consider acquiring land based on requirements and offered compensation as per the Price Fixation Committee rules.

Notably, the notice came about 50 days after the state cabinet notified 1,777 acres in Channarayanapatna hobli, Devanahalli, as a "permanent special agricultural zone".

The Urban Development Department (UDD) also issued a notification, effectively banning development activities or land use change in the region. The KIADB's notice references these developments.

The January 23 notice states an expert committee will draft guidelines for managing the "permanent special agricultural zone". It adds that landowners' revenue records will note their property falls under this zone.

When the government dropped the aerospace park plan in mid-2025, Devanahalli farmers saw it as a victory after 1,198 days of protest, including instances of police brutality.

Deadline unfair, says activist

Karahalli Srinivas, a prominent farmer leader and Dalit activist, said the KIADB was trying to intimidate farmers by switching rules "as and when it likes".

"We are not opposed to the agricultural zone, but we are against the imposed conditions," he said, questioning the KIADB's three-month deadline.

"Once a gazette notification is issued for the entire 1,777 acres, how can the government selectively re-notify lands of owners who wish to give up their land? This benefits political leaders and brokers who have struck deals with the government," he added.

Posters at BJP MLA's house: Cong workers arrested

BENGALURU, DHNS

Four Congress workers were arrested for pasting posters outside BJP MLA S Suresh Kumar's house in Rajajinagar on "Saturday.

Suresh Kumar

The suspects — Shankar, Manju, Naveen and Sai, all residents of Basaveshwaranagar — were released later on station bail.

A group of Congress workers protested the BJP legislator's "derogatory remark" against Urban Development and Town Planning Minister Byrathi Suresh in the Legislative Assembly on Friday. They raised slogans against the BJP leader and later pasted the posters.

In a video released on Sunday, Kumar said the remark was a colloquial phrase and was expunged from the records.

"It has hurt me that those posters pasted by Congress workers questioned my culture and claimed I disrespected women. The incident at my house yesterday is truly pitiable. Those workers do not know what they are doing or the consequences of it. I ask workers of all parties: please do not engage in such activities just for cheap publicity or out of aggression. I want to clarify once again: I did not speak with any disrespect. It was a proverb or idiom used to describe haste, and I had no other intention," Kumar said in a video on his Facebook account.

On Sunday, the Bengaluru Central District Congress Campaign Committee filed a complaint with the Vidhana Soudha police, seeking a case and legal action against Kumar over the remark.

Woman killed as car rams their scooter; daughter survives

BENGALURU, DHNS: A woman was killed on the spot and her daughter sustained injuries after a speeding car rammed their scooter from behind in Banasawadi in east Bengaluru on Saturday evening, police said.

Aruna (42), a resident of Babusapalya, was riding with her daughter Nandini towards Hebbal when the incident occurred.

As they were passing through the Hennur Junction underpass on the Outer Ring Road, a car travelling at high speed rear-ended their scooter, throwing both women off the vehicle.

The car then ran over Aruna, causing fatal injuries, police said.

Police arrested the car driver, identified as Anas, a native of Kerala, and seized the vehicle. Preliminary investigations indicate that overspeeding caused the accident.

Nandini, a software engineer at a private firm, sustained minor injuries and was discharged after treatment at a hospital.

Deteriorating Dinnur Main Rd raises safety concerns

RT Nagar residents say road too narrow, has rare police presence

ASRA MAVAD
BENGALURU, DHNS

Traffic congestion at Dinnur Main Road, a road too narrow for two lanes. DH PHOTO/BK JANARDHAN

RT Nagar residents have raised concerns about the deteriorating Dinnur Main Road, citing broken patches and deep potholes that make commuting increasingly hazardous.

A narrow two-lane thoroughfare, Dinnur Road is notorious for traffic jams.

"The road is not wide enough to be a two-lane road, but that is how it has always been. As a BMTC bus access road, it remains congested for most of the day. There is rarely any police official present. Government officials fix potholes, but they are ruined in weeks," said G Suresh, 70, who lives by the main road.

The junction where Dinnur Road meets Deve Gowda Road is the most congested.

"It is one of the narrowest junctions in the city. Heavy vehicle movement on both roads makes it especially difficult to drive here during evening rush hour," said Vidya Goggi, a resident of the White House apartment complex in RT Nagar.

She also notes the lack of proper footpaths along the stretch.

"Several senior citizens live in our apartment and step out every day. It has become dangerous as there is barely a clear stretch of footpath. There are encroachments everywhere," she said, adding that efforts to fix footpath and garbage issues with the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) have not yielded results.

Population surge

With new residential complexes coming up, the population has surged, but amenities have not kept pace. Due to lack of routine garbage collection, Dinnur Road and its surroundings remain riddled with blackspots.

Hebbal MLA Byrathi Suresh said Dinnur Main Road would be transformed under the TenderSURE model within a year.

"We will white-top the road and fix the current issues. Once redeveloped, it should last for about 20 years. The tender has been issued, and work is likely to begin in the next six to eight weeks. We will also address the footpath and encroachment issues," he told *DH*.

BYRATHI SURESH
Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning

"We will white-top the road and fix the current issues. Once redeveloped, it should last for about 20 years. The tender has been issued, and work is likely to begin in the next six to eight weeks. We will also address the footpath and encroachment issues.

The MLA said his efforts to widen the road have not been met with a positive response.

"Land acquisition remains the biggest problem. Despite asking multiple times, neither residents nor commercial entities are willing to give up land under TDR. My plan was to add 10 feet on either side and expand Dinnur Main Road to a 60-foot road."

Rare raptor draws crowd to Ambalipura Lake

BENGALURU, DHNS: The sighting of a European honey buzzard at Ambalipura Lake in southeast Bengaluru has drawn birdwatchers to the area and underscored the need to protect the city's wetlands.

European Honey Buzzard. PHOTO: AADITYA G TILI

Located off Sarjapura Road, the lake has a green expanse of over 500 acres at its southern end. The raptor has been spotted in the area since January 22, attracting birdwatchers and ornithologists.

Unlike the crested honey buzzard native to India, the European honey buzzard is smaller and can be identified by distinct features such as a dark terminal tail band with two finer bars and a well-defined dark carpal patch.

According to the eBird website, the species has previously been sighted mainly in coastal regions of the country.

Aaditya G Tili, a local birdwatcher, described the sighting in Bengaluru as "extremely rare". He said the lake's open clearings surrounded by forest offered an ideal habitat for the bird. "We need to protect every small patch of greenery and every lake in Bengaluru if the city is to remain a garden city," he said.

Spend every minute practising your dreams, filmmaker tells students

BENGALURU, DHNS: Students must arm themselves intellectually, filmmaker Dibakar Banerjee said at the inaugural ceremony of the 10th edition of MediaCon International Conference and Association fests of the School of Communication and Media Studies (SCMS) at St Joseph's University on January 23.

He added that populism and authoritarianism will increasingly confront them as everyday realities rather than remaining abstract political ideas.

Urging young people to prepare for what he described as a "big, bad world", Banerjee said every minute spent "practising your dreams, flexing your brains, and figuring out what you want to do, and what you don't" would shape how well they navigate emerging social and political complexities.

The inaugural ceremony was presided over by Vice-Chancellor Rev Dr Victor Lobo, Registrar Dr Wajeed Sayed, SCMS Dean Dr Melwyn Pinto, Head of the Department Dr Marudhu Pandiyan, and coordinators Shabin PK, Dr Rupa Peter, Ajay Chandran, Jenil George and Suhas Srinivas.

The conference, themed around populism and media, examined how digital platforms, legacy media and alternative voices shape political discourse, public opinion and democratic participation in an increasingly polarised global context.

Dignitaries at the 10th edition of the conference, which was conducted by the School of Communication and Media Studies, St Joseph's University.

Cops hit the road to promote safety

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP), including Cobra patrolmen and other officers, organised a motorbike rally on Sunday to raise awareness about road safety.

The rally began at Sri Kanteerava Stadium and concluded at the Senior Police Officers' Mess via MG Road. It was held as part of National Road Safety Month, observed from January 1 to 31, to sensitise road users about the importance of following traffic rules.

Bengaluru Police Commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh and Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic) Karthik Reddy participated in the rally.

Additional Commissioner of Transport and Secretary of the Karnataka State Transport Authority BP Umashankar; Additional Commissioner of Transport, Administration C Mallikarjuna; and all Deputy Commissioners of Police (Traffic) were also present at the programme, according to the press release.

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

Republic Day: Flag hoisting; Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot; Field Marshal Manekshaw Sam Parade Ground, MG Road; 9 am.

'Science, Stewardship and Solidarity': A celebration of the life and legacy of Dr Madhav Gadgil; Harini Nagendra, Gurudas Nulkar and Ramachandra Guha to attend; Bangalore International Centre (BIC), Domlur; 6.30 pm.

CULTURAL

46th Annual Music Festival: Organised by Padmavati Kalaniketan; Sri Krishna Devaraya Kala Mandiram, Vyalikaval; 3.30 pm.

Cultural Festival: 'Arohana-2026'; K Srinath and Parshvanath Upadhyay to attend; Meenakshi Rangamancha, Poornaprajna Sports and Cultural Association, Dr Vishnuvardhan Road; 5 pm.

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST
Mist

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	25.0°C
Minimum	18.0°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	--
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm)	56%
Sunset (Jan 26)	6:17 pm
Sunrise (Jan 27)	6:46 am
Moonrise	11:10 am
Moonset	--:--

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

Invites to be published in this column should be sent to: **incitytoday@deccanherald.co.in.** Please note that hard copies will not be accepted

CLASSICS ON DISPLAY

Vintage car exhibition showcases last century's iconic vehicles

BENGALURU, DHNS

Vintage car enthusiasts gathered at Bangalore Club on Sunday to showcase iconic cars from the last century.

The 'Retro Revival—Vintage and Classic Car Exhibition', organised by the Bangalore Club and the Karnataka Vintage and Classic Car Club (KVCCC), featured over 60 cars.

Vehicles arrived around 9 am and lined the club's central pathway. The 157-year-old club's heritage buildings formed a fitting backdrop, with the oldest car dating back to 1917.

"We organise this every year, and this year is special as it coincides with Republic Day," said Shailendra Gupta, a member of the organising committee.

His 1960 Fiat Millecento was on display. "This has been in my family for over 55 years. It is very reliable. We used to drive it to South India's hills for holidays. It has also travelled to Mumbai, Pune and Hyderabad," Gupta said.

A Daimler DB18, owned by SK Prithvinath, was once part of Jayachamarajendra Wodeyar's fleet. Manufactured in 1947, it belonged to KN Srinivasan, a classmate of the Maharaja, before Prithvinath acquired it.

Other vehicles included a 1947 Cadillac Fleetwood, a 1917 Ford Model T, and a 1953 Austin A40 Sports. "This A40 is one of three in India. It is used regularly, even to drop my children to school," said Christopher Rodricks, owner of the Austin and vice-president of KVCCC.

Car enthusiasts admire a 1947 Cadillac Series 62 at Bangalore Club on Sunday. DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

Rodricks runs Rodricks Restorations in Hennur. "A few enthusiasts have made restoration their profession, but we encourage members to restore their vehicles themselves. Restoration becomes a large part of ownership," he said.

Gupta noted sourcing parts is challenging. "Most of the time we import them from the UK or Europe."

However, Bengaluru's vintage car network makes ownership and maintenance easier, he said.

Need a hand? Write to us

Letters of grievances are pouring in and we are doing our best to accommodate as many as possible. Readers may write in to highlight civic problems affecting their locality and we will help address them in an interactive and effective manner. Grievances and issues related to public utility agencies such as Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) and Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (Bescom) would be highlighted in the weekly column.

The writeups, which could be accompanied by photographs highlighting the problems, will be published on Mondays. Mail your grievances to: peoplesproblems @ deccanherald.co.in

Hennur needs skywalk — now

There is an urgent need to construct a skywalk across Lingarajapuram–Hennur Main Road, connecting Lingarajapuram and Kariyanapalya.

Every day, hundreds of pedestrians, including students, workers, senior citizens and the sick, struggle to cross this heavily congested road. With no safe pedestrian facility in place, they are forced to risk their lives as vehicles speed past.

After the Lingarajapuram flyover, there is no designated pedestrian crossing. The junction near Shobha Stores remains the only point where people attempt to cross, but it is extremely dangerous, as vehicles descend the flyover ramp at high speed. The road also serves as an alternative route to the airport, further increasing traffic volume.

The absence of a safe crossing has led to frequent near-misses and poses a serious threat to public safety. Constructing a skywalk equipped with lifts would greatly reduce the risk to pedestrians and ensure safe and convenient movement across the road.

We urge the authorities to address this issue at the earliest.

Residents of Lingarajapuram

Move over Davos, fix Bengaluru first

Our Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar and other delegates recently attended the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, Switzerland, inviting global leaders and businesses to invest in Bengaluru.

While such outreach is important, it is disheartening to see the deteriorating condition of roads and footpaths in the city. Many stretches are unsafe and hazardous for pedestrians and motorists alike.

Taxpayers' money must be prioritised to fix roads, repair footpaths and ensure safer mobility so that residents can enjoy a decent quality of life.

Shakeer P Kandy

A dilapidated footpath on NR Road, opposite City Jamia Masjid.

The skywalk across Okalipuram Main Road remains largely unused as people cross the busy road below.

Mr GBA chief, many skywalks are of no use

This is with reference to the construction of new skywalks to ease pedestrian movement, as explained by GBA Chief Commissioner M Maheshwar Rao in an interview to *DH* on January 18.

While crossing the main, traffic-heavy roads, the existing skywalks provide little benefit to citizens. They are difficult to use, especially for senior citizens, and the lifts are often non-functional.

Many skywalks are being constructed at locations where they serve no real purpose. Citizens frequently find it easier to cross the road through narrow dividers, often risking their lives.

Some, such as the one near the Okalipuram bus stand, are almost entirely redundant. People continue to cross the road amid heavy traffic, endangering themselves and disrupting traffic flow. In many cases, the skywalks seem to benefit public representatives as advertising spaces rather than pedestrians.

The two skywalks near the KSR Bengaluru metro station (opposite Leprosy Hospital on Magadi Road) and opposite ETA Star Apartments near the railway underbridge are similarly of little use.

It appears that little thought is given to the actual utility of these structures during construction; instead, they are used as profit-generating projects.

I request the GBA chief to inspect and assess all existing skywalks to ensure they fulfill their intended purpose before constructing new ones. Taxpayers' money should be prioritised for projects that truly benefit the public.

Sathyaprakash C

Celebrate the right to happiness with Amul Ice Cream.

Chocolate Brownie Sandwich Gold
80 mL / ₹35*

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Cake Magic Black Forest
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King Alphonso Gold
1 L / ₹235*

Choco Maltino
125 mL / ₹35*

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1 L / ₹270*

Refreshing Strawberry
100 mL / ₹18*

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Caramel Chocolate Gold
1 L / ₹235*

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125 mL / ₹45*

Sugar Free Punjabi Kulfi
60 mL / ₹20*

Dark Chocolate Tricone
120 mL / ₹40*

Shahi Kulfi Rajbhog
100 mL / ₹65*

Dark Frostik
70 mL / ₹35*

Asli Aam Gold
80 mL / ₹25*

Cake Magic Golden Fantasy
500 mL / ₹325*

Ice Malai
125 mL / ₹ 45*

Kulhad Kulfi
100 mL / ₹45*

BESTSELLERS

Butterscotch Gold
1 L / ₹235*

King Alphonso Gold
1 L / ₹235*

Coffee
125 mL / ₹35*

Cookie n Cream
125 mL / ₹35*

Black Currant Tricone
120 mL / ₹25*

Gold Butterscotch Tricone
120 mL / ₹35*

Cassatta Gold
150 mL / ₹60*

EPIC Almond Gold
80 mL / ₹90*

Vanilla Sandwhich
80 mL / ₹25*

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125 mL / ₹30*

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*Offer valid till 05th February 2026 (during the match hours of the teams mentioned above). *Conditions apply. Offer valid in select markets.

Exercise your right without fear, Governor urges voters

BENGALURU, DHNS: Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot on Sunday urged voters to exercise their right without 'fear, pressure or provocation'.

Participating in the the 16th National Voters' Day programme organised by the Election Commission of India, Gehlot said that the concept of one vote- one voice- and one responsibility constitutes the 'soul of democracy'.

"By granting universal suffrage, the Indian Constitution has given the people supreme authority over administration. Voting is not merely a legal right but also a constitutional duty of citizens in a democracy," he noted. Explaining that the National Voters' Day inspires everyone to take a pledge, he said: "Uphold the democratic values advocated in the Constitution. We must vote, encourage others to vote and undertake our duty towards the nation."

Woman, two kids found hanging

PERIYAPATNA (MYSURU DIST), DHNS: A woman and her two children were found hanging dead at H Mattada Koppalu village, in Periyapatna taluk, Mysuru district, on Sunday.

Hemalatha (38), her daughter Anu (15) and son Chetan (13), are the deceased. Hemavathy has left a deathnote alleging that her husband, mother-in-law and father-in-law were harassing her. Her husband Mahadeva has been arrested, Police said. Hemalatha's brother has lodged a complaint with Periyapatna police that Mahadev and his parents were responsible for the suicide of his sister and children.

Cong, Opposition gear up for MGNREGA debate in session

Priyank to lead govt charge; Ashoka, Chalavadi to counter

BENGALURU, DHNS

The ruling Congress and the opposition NDA led by the BJP are bracing up for a fierce showdown over the repeal of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in the final three days of the legislature session called to deliberate on the issue.

DH has accessed documents prepared by the state government and the BJP on their respective arguments.

The government is expected to attack the BJP on the change in the funding structure (90:10 centre-state ratio to 60:40) in the new Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act - VB-G RAM (G) Act, the removal of the right of panchayats to decide the order of priority of different projects, removal of the 60-day pause clause, the "unilateral authority" of the Union government to "switch off" and "switch on" and scrapping of statutory minimum wages.

As per a PowerPoint presentation given to the state Cabinet by the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (RDPR) Department, the MGNREGA permitted "no contractors," while the VB — G RAM (G) Act includes contractors in cases where components of a work are financed under other schemes. "This allows for two different standards of work within a single work. The wages paid to the labour brought by contractors would be different from the wages paid to workers VB — G RAM (G), creating an anomaly," it states.

A file photo of a work in progress under the previous Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. The government is expected to attack the BJP on the change in the funding structure. The saffron party's arguments will include the legal guarantee of 125 days of unskilled wage employment per rural household. DH PHOTO

In his letter to the prime minister, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had also mentioned that the "objective parameters" based on which the state-wise allocations would be made wasn't mentioned in the Act.

BJP's retort

The BJP's defence is expected to feature its arguments in favour of VB — G RAM (G) and its claims on greater achievements under MGNREGA from 2014-25 than the UPA's performance from 2006-14.

According to a BJP document which *DH* has accessed, the saffron party's arguments will include the legal guarantee of 125 days of unskilled wage employment per rural household instead of the 100 days mentioned in MGNREGA, "strong whole-of-Government convergence across Central, State and Local Government schemes," and the "objective parameters" for state-wise allocations would ensure "equity (samata), fairness (nyaysangata) and balanced regional development, while addressing inter-state and intra-state disparities."

The BJP is also expected to claim that it released Rs 8.53 lakh crore for MGNREGA from 2014-25 as opposed to Rs 2.13 lakh crore by the UPA governments from 2006-14. The saffron party also claims that 862 lakh works were completed (2014-25) as against 153 lakh works (2006-14).

RDPR minister, Priyank Kharge is expected to lead the government's charge. Speaking to *DH*, Priyank explained that the Congress had a separate seminar on the issue, where all MLAs were briefed. In the BJP camp, Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly R Ashoka and his Legislative Council counterpart Chalavadi Narayanaswamy may lead the defence.

Rs 400 cr 'heist': Will register FIR based on concrete evidence, says Belagavi SP

BENGALURU/ BELAGAVI, PTI

Belagavi Superintendent of Police K Ramarajan on Sunday said the district police are yet to receive any concrete evidence regarding the alleged robbery of Rs 400 crore at Chorla Ghat, and that no FIR has been registered so far in Karnataka in the absence of a formal complaint.

The Nashik police in the neighbouring Maharashtra, who are investigating the matter, have registered a case and arrested six persons.

Ramarajan said the matter came to light after the Belagavi police received a communication from Maharashtra Police following arrests made in a kidnapping and assault case registered in Nashik district.

"On January 16, we received a letter from the Senior Superintendent of Police, Nashik district, stating that a robbery occurred at Chorla Ghat in Belagavi district," Ramarajan told reporters.

The Nashik police informed that one Sandeep Datta Patil was allegedly kidnapped on October 22 by a group of four persons, assaulted and later released, following claims that Rs 400 crore had been robbed.

According to sources, the complainant said the money was in two trucks and it was in old Rs 2,000 denomination notes, which is no more in circulation.

"The robbers have stated that Sandeep Datta Patil had robbed the money. Later on we sent a team of police officers to Nashik to find out about the robbery, if at all it has happened," he said.

Ramarajan said the Belagavi police have deputed an officer from Khanapur police station, the jurisdictional area for Chorla Ghat, to Nashik to gather first-hand information and coordinate with the Maharashtra Police.

"Any piece of evidence or eyewitness or anybody who is victim of this robbery can approach us. We are ready to register an FIR. Based on hearsay we cannot register an FIR," he said.

The SP said he has formally written to Nashik Rural counterpart seeking specific details and evidence, stating that the information shared so far was largely "hearsay" in nature and lacked critical particulars required to initiate criminal proceedings.

"If the Maharashtra police need our cooperation, we are ready to extend it," Ramarajan said.

Speaking to reporters in Bengaluru, Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara said he has sought more details on this incident.

"I have asked for more details from our police. The investigation is still in its initial stage and proper information has not been received yet. We have to see how much should be the involvement of Karnataka police," Parameshwara said.

According to him, Maharashtra police have said they may require Karnataka's cooperation.

Gold prices set for...

Gold price, from Page 1

"Though gold touched Rs 1.5 lakh per 10 grams, there is still room for further gains," Mallya said, adding that tariffs, geopolitical tensions, interest rate cuts, and central bank gold accumulation could push prices toward $5,500 per ounce (each ounce is 28.34 grams) internationally and Rs 1,72,000 per 10 grams domestically.

Gold is increasingly recognised as a core portfolio component. Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst — Commodities at HDFC Securities, said, "Investors now view gold as a resilient asset offering diversification, capital preservation, and risk-adjusted returns. The rally could extend further this year."

Macroeconomic uncertainty, geopolitical risks, trade tensions, inflation concerns, a soft US dollar, and volatility in equities and bonds reinforce gold's safe-haven appeal.

Gandhi expects spot gold to reach $5,220-5,625 per ounce, and MCX gold to hit Rs 1,66,125-1,79,323 per 10 grams.

Apurva Sheth, Head of Market Perspectives and Research at SAMCO Securities, noted that fiscal deficits, central bank demand, and a supportive real interest rate environment underpin gold's strength. "While interim consolidations are natural, gold remains well-positioned over the coming years. The next major target could be near $7,040 per ounce, indicating further upside. Gold behaves as a reliable long-term portfolio anchor rather than a short-term trade," he said.

"We expect over 20-25% upside in 2026, driven by central-bank buying, ETF inflows, Fed cuts, and geopolitical policy uncertainty. Accordingly, we see gold averaging $5,200-5,400 per troy ounce," Elara Capital Deputy Head of Research and Economist Garima Kapoor said.

In India, gold carries both cultural and investment significance. Deloitte India's report, Go for Gold: A Winning Playbook for the Gems & Jewellery Industry, reveals that 86% of consumers consider gold as a preferred wealth-creation instrument, nearly matching market-linked products such as mutual funds and stocks (87%). Jewellery's role is also evolving, with 56% viewing it as both investment and fashion, and 28% purely as investment.

A Bhima Gold spokesperson concluded, "Gold demand in India is tied to long-term savings and festive or wedding purchases, lending stability to demand cycles. Rather than focusing on specific price targets, a long-term perspective, trust, and disciplined purchasing matter more than short-term market fluctuations."

Added Naresh Chetan, Co-founder & MD, Zaveri Bros Diamonds and Gold, "For retail customers, the need of the hour is purchasing gold during marriages and festivals. They will buy gold jewellery come what may."

Maha SIT arrests 6 persons in...

Heist, from Page 1

The incident took place on October 16, 2025, when two container trucks carrying a substantial amount of cash allegedly went missing in the forested Chorla Ghat stretch in Khanapur tehsil, Belagavi district, along the Maharashtra-Karnataka border.

The money originated from Karnataka and was destined for Gujarat, where it was supposed to be converted into lower denominations and transferred to Maharashtra, Nashik rural police had told the local media. More than two months after the incident, on Jan 9, 2026, a man named Sandeep Patil, a resident of Igatpuri, Nashik district, filed a police complaint with the Nashik rural police claiming he was abducted at gunpoint by associates of Kishor Sheth. According to the FIR, Sheth, also a resident of Nashik, accused Patil of orchestrating the container heist.

Patil claimed that he was detained for over a month and was tortured and told to pay Rs 400 crore. However, he managed to escape and filed a complaint with Nashik rural police, the FIR said. Nashik Rural SP Balasaheb Patil is coordinating the efforts.

"We are making investigations into the case," Additional SP Aaditya Mirkhelkar told reporters. The FIR also names Kishor Sawala, who is a builder from Thane.

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Nimhans researchers cure man of 'stock trading addiction'

Nimhans, from Page 1

The young man, identified as Mr D, hailed from an upper middle-class background. What began four years ago as a quest for a secondary income through mobile trading apps soon spiralled out of control.

According to the case report, the individual transitioned from small investments to high-risk Intraday and Futures & Options (F&O) trading.

As the losses mounted, so did the compulsion. Mr D reported a total loss of control, spending hours monitoring market movements and experiencing severe anxiety outside trading hours.

To fund his addiction and chase losses, he turned to digital loan apps, eventually accumulating a staggering debt of Rs 80 lakh.

"He was preoccupied with trading strategies and felt a compulsive urge to trade even after massive losses," Dr Rajesh Kumar, Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychology, and one of the researchers, told *DH*.

"The addiction led to social withdrawal, sleep disturbances, and a pattern of deceiving family members to hide the extent of his financial ruin," he added.

Demat accounts aplenty

The case comes at a time when retail participation in the stock market is at an all-time high. Data shows that demat accounts in India have crossed the 200-million mark, with nearly 75% of new accounts opened by individuals under 30.

While these platforms offer convenience, researchers warn they also provide instant gratification similar to casino environments.

Recent SEBI data supports this concern, revealing that 93% of retail traders in the F&O segment incurred losses over the last few years.

Dr Sarada Subramanian, one of co-authors of the report, told *DH*, "Mr D was treated using a multimodal behavioral intervention at the SHUT Clinic. Over ten sessions, he underwent digital fasting, stimulus control which involved staying away from trading apps and delegated his financial control to family members."

"Relapse prevention techniques, known as the "Four Ds" (Deep breathing, Drinking water, Discussion with family, and Decreasing mobile use), were used to manage urges," Dr Sarada said. "Following the intervention, his Stock Addiction Inventory (SAI) score dropped from a severe 24 to a 4, signalling a return to normalcy," she added.

Medical professionals are now calling for earlier recognition of these symptoms. As trading apps continue to gamify the stock market, the line between investing and addiction is becoming dangerously thin for many young professionals.

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Poll-bound states top list of Padma awards

Padma, from Page 1

The Padma Bhushan awardees also include late BJP MP VK Malhotra, former Uttarakhand Chief Minister BS Koshiyari, ad-man late Piyush Pandey, singer Alka Yagnik and former tennis star Vijay Amritraj, among others.

The Padma Bhushan for Natesan is seen as a bid to woo the Ezhavas, an influential OBC community that is said to stand behind the CPM. Natesan's son Tushar Vellappally is the chief of BJDS, which is a BJP ally in Kerala.

The award for Mammootty comes months after the government chose Malayalam superstar Mohanlal for the Dadasaheb Phalke award.

The ruling BJP is known for subtle political messaging through awards, which includes earlier instances of conferring Bharat Ratna on Bhupen Hazarika, Charan Singh and Karpoori Thakur and Padma awards on leaders like Sharad Pawar.

Former civil servants K Vijayakumar, who headed the Veerappan hunt, and RVS Mani, who claimed that he was forced to sign documents to fabricate a narrative on Hindutva terrorism, are also among the Padma winners.

Former UGC Chairman and Jawaharlal Nehru University Vice Chancellor Mamidala Jagadeesh Kumar, actor R Madhavan and former Prasar Bharati CEO Shashi Shekhar Vempati were chosen for Padma Shri, as was the late actor Satish Shah.

Four from the trade and industry sector were chosen for the Padma Awards – industrialist Uday Kotak got Padma Bhushan while late TT Jagannathan of TTK Group, Satyanarayan Nuwal of Solar Industries Ltd and Ashok Khade of DAS Offshore Engineering Private Ltd got Padma Shri. From the world of sports, the late Vladimir Mestvirishvili, the architect of India's wrestling resurgence, was chosen for Padma Shri along with seven others. The other Padma Shri winners included top cricketers Rohit Sharma and Harmanpreet Kaur, who captained India to win the T20 World Cup, hockey goalkeeper Savita Punia, para-jumper Praveen Kumar.

Woman says husband kicked her out after cancer diagnosis

BENGALURU, DHNS: A 22-year-old woman has filed a complaint with the North Women police, alleging her husband abandoned her after she was diagnosed with cancer and that she was subjected to sustained cruelty, humiliation, and body shaming by her in-laws.

A senior police officer said the woman stated in her complaint that she was married on March 5, 2023. She alleged her family spent nearly Rs 13 lakh on the wedding and gave her gold and silver ornaments.

The harassment began after a year, when she was diagnosed with cancer.

Her husband and in-laws allegedly harassed her instead of providing care and support. She claimed her in-laws subjected her to severe mental cruelty, making derogatory remarks about her hair loss and body shaming her by calling her an "evil spirit".

She also alleged that her husband, a cab driver, developed a relationship with another woman and justified it by claiming her illness would "spread" to him and his family if she stayed with them.

Earlier, the woman had approached the Peenya police, leading to a non-cognisable report (NCR) on February 18. As the alleged harassment continued, she lodged a fresh complaint with the North Women police, seeking legal action against her husband and in-laws.

After the FIR was registered, the accused was summoned, but he refused to care for her, seeking a divorce due to her illness.

Investigations are ongoing, a senior police officer said.

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'Recycle Resolutions' campaign launched in city

BENGALURU, DHNS

Invaluables Bengaluru has launched 'Recycle Resolutions' to promote recyclability and dignity for the city's waste pickers.

The campaign urges citizens to adopt three existing habits — Wash the Dabba, Got Old Clothes?, and Mark It Red — under one collective reminder.

By framing these proven behaviours as New Year promises, the campaign aims to extend change beyond the festive season, showing how small actions at home influence the safety and dignity of informal waste pickers.

Wash the Dabba

'Wash the Dabba' involves washing takeaway boxes before disposal and has been adopted by 60% of those exposed to the campaign. Dry Waste Collection Centres (DWCCs) have also reported visibly cleaner containers.

Got Old Clothes?

'Got Old Clothes?' encourages Bengalureans to wash and hand over old clothes to waste pickers at nearby DWCCs. This helped collect 1.8 tonnes of garments across 16 centres in a month, nearly double the usual volume.

Mark It Red

'Mark It Red' urges the public to dispose of sanitary and diaper waste by wrapping it and marking the package with a red "X". It saw 41% of the audience begin to wrap hazardous waste in paper and mark it with a red cross.

This week, Recycle Resolutions was rolled out across outdoor platforms, including select bus shelters in prominent areas and Namma Metro, ensuring visibility among daily commuters.

It will soon be launched on digital platforms and in several city apartments.

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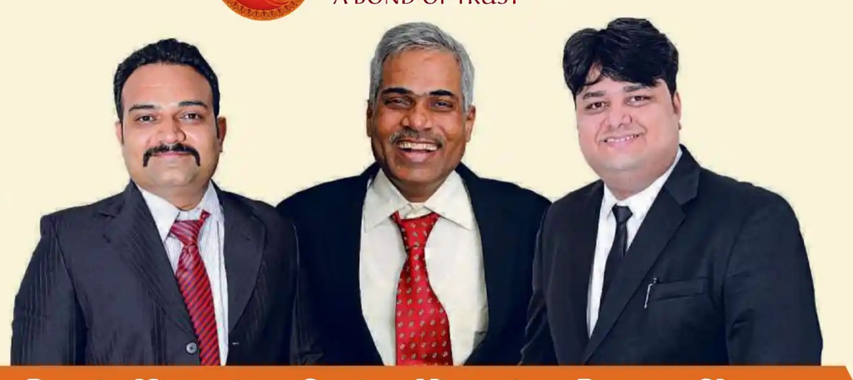

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Deserving of decoration : A former bus conductor who set up the world's largest free-access library, well-known polyglot Shatavadhani R Ganesh and noted educationist Prabhakar Kore are among those recognised for their contributions

8 eminent men & women in list of Padma awardees from state

Adept in tricky traditional art form Avadhana

Dr Shatavadhani R Ganesh is a renowned practitioner of the ancient art of avadhana, polyglot and author.

The 63-year-old is celebrated for reviving and mastering avadhana — an intricate performance art that demands extraordinary mental agility and multitasking skills.

Shatavadhani R Ganesh

In an avadhana performance, the artiste must simultaneously compose extempore poetry in classical metres, solve complex mathematical puzzles, answer questions posed by multiple scholars and maintain aesthetic grace and literary excellence throughout.

Ganesh has performed over 1,300 avadhanas in four languages: Kannada, Sanskrit, Telugu and Prakrit. He is renowned for his extempore composition of poetry, including intricate chitrakavya (visual poetry), during these sessions.

He is the only hat vadh ni (one who performs with 100 questioners) from Karnataka and is credited with single handedly reviving avadhana tradition in Kannada, which had no living practitioners when he began in 1981.

He has also authored numerous books in Kannada, Sanskrit and English on topics ranging from classical literature and philosophy to cultural criticism.

Born in Kolar in 1962, Dr Ganesh holds a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from University Visvesvaraya College of Engineering, Bengaluru; a master's degree in metallurgy from Indian Institute of Science; MA in Sanskrit; and DLitt from Hampi University for his thesis on avadhana in Kannada.

His linguistic mastery extends to Kannada, Sanskrit, Telugu, Tamil, Hindi, Marathi, English, Prakrit, Pali, Greek, Latin and Italian.

Beyond avadhana, Dr Ganesh has enriched Indian performing arts by conceptualizing innovative formats like solo Yakshagana performance, Kavya-chitra-gita-nritya (a fusion of poetry, painting, music, and dance) and Raganuraga — that introduced 120 classical ragas to wider audiences.

Technocrat who sterered DD, AIR into digital age

Shashi Shekhar Vempati served as the youngest chief executive officer (CEO) of Prasar Bharati.

He is widely credited with steering India's public broadcasters—Doordarshan and All India Radio (Akashvani)—into digital age, strengthening their relevance in a rapidly evolving media landscape.

Shashi Shekhar Vempati

An alumnus of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Bombay, Vempati had a long stint at the Infosys Technologies before managing the digital news media startup Niti Digital. He later took up his role in public broadcasting.

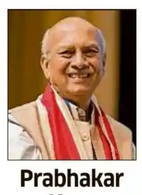
Most recently, he was appointed chairperson of the external experts group by the University Grants Commission (UGC) to review the functioning and future roadmap of educational media research centres at 22 universities in India.

Between 2017 and 2022, Vempati served as the youngest — and the first non-bureaucrat — CEO of the Prasar Bharati, India's public broadcaster, overseeing the digital transformation of broadcasting across Doordarshan and Akashvani.

Educationist who set up schools in border villages of N-K

Prabhakar Kore has been recognised for his contributions in the fields of education and literature.

Lakhs of students study in the group of institutions (engineering, technical, medical and general) started by him under the Karnataka Lingayat Education (KLE) Society.



Prabhakar Kore

The 78-year-old has been a member of the Rajya Sabha for three terms and a member of the legislative council for one term.

He is also the vice president ofd the Akhila Bharata Veerashaiva Mahasabha.

Kore has also been one of the driving forces behind the construction of the Suvarna Vidhana Soudha, the state's second secretariat building in Belagavi.

The educationist expressed joy at being recognised for his services.

But, he said he never worked for any award and that he would continue to serve the society till his last breath.

Recalling that he played a stellar role in taking education to the villages, especially in the border areas of north Karnataka, Kore said he started the first Kannada school at Nippani.

PADMA BHUSHAN	**PADMA SHRI**	**Prabhakar Kore** (education and literature)	**S G Susheelamma** (social work)	**T T Jagannathan** (posthumous-trade and industry)
Shatavadhani R Ganesh (Arts)		**Anke Gowda M** (social work)	**Suresh Hanagavadi** (medicine)	**Shashi Shekhar Vempati** (education and literature) / **Shubha Venkatesh Iyengar** (science and engineering)

Aerospace this woman scientist's area of excellence

Born on May 14, 1954, in Bengaluru to Venkatesha Iyengar and Rajamma, Shubha studied BSc (honours) at National College and MSc in Bangalore University. She joined the National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL) in 1974 and, after securing a CSIR fellowship, completed her PhD from the University of Mysore.

She began her professional career as a scientist in 1982 and worked in the field of material science.

She developed a technology called 'Drishti', which provides pilots with appropriate guidance for flying aircraft and landing them at designated locations. This technology is now also being used by the Indian Air Force and is entirely indigenously developed.

Shubha Venkatesha Iyengar

In addition, Shubha played a key role in the Agni missile project developed by the Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL), Hyderabad.

She was also involved in several aerospace-related research activities. Shubha retired in 2020.

She was conferred the Karnataka Academy of Science and Technology award in 2023.

Anke Gowda's library 'Pustaka Mane' at Haralahalli, Pandavapura taluk, Mandya district. DH PHOTO

Bibliophile who piled up for the rank & file to read

Manke Gowda, 76, has set up the free access library 'Pustaka Mane,' at Haralahalli village, Pandavapura taluk, Mandya district.

Anke Gowda has collected over 20 lakh books in a large building in the village under the name of Ankegowda Foundation.

M Anke Gowda

Inspired by the words of Kannada professor K Anantaramu, who had advised to develop a good hobby in life, like book collection, Gowda started his collection by buying small books. Now, there are millions of books now in his collection.

He had worked as a timekeeper at the Pandavapura cooperative sugar factory.

Gowda used the Rs 6 lakh he got from selling a site he owned in Mysuru and an additional Rs 5 lakh for buying books.

Learning that the bibliophile's small house was full of books, businessman Hari Khoday built a large building at a cost of Rs 80 lakh for him to keep the books. The library is named 'Pustakada Mane' under Anke Gowda Jnana Pratishthana.

Political leaders like Rahul Gandhi, H D Kumaraswamy, D V Sadananda Gowda, MLAs and writers have visited Gowda's library.

The library has thousands of books in Kannada, Hindi, English, Tamil and other languages. There is a huge collection of 2,500 books on Mahatma Gandhi. There are also books on Bhagavadgita, Mahabharata, Jainism, Buddhism and the Bible.

Anke Gowda has received several awards, including the Rajyotsava award, and earned a place in Limca Book of Records.

"I was happy to hear that I have been selected for the Padmashri award. My wish was to collect all the knowledge of the world in one place and make it accessible to the common man," Gowda said.

A hope for haemophilics, he was DH Changemaker 2021

Suresh Hanagavadi, professor of pathology at JJM Medical College in Davangere and founder of Karnataka Haemophilia Society, is among the Padmashri awardees this year. He was also in the list of of *DH* Changemakers for 2021.

Suresh Hanagavadi

Suresh, being a severe haemophilic himself, has extensively travelled across the country to improve the quality of haemophilia care services.

He also played a crucial role in making expensive medicines for haemophilia patients available free of cost at all government district hospitals in Karnataka.

Hanagavadi has established a state-of-the-art treatment centre in Davangere for all inherited blood disorders under one roof by mobilising resources from the public, philanthropists and the government. This centre provides quality treatment free of cost to thousands of patients, including those from other states. He has been chosen for the award in recognition of his tireless efforts in preventing disability.

Hanagavadi told *DH* that the award was unexpected. "This is the result of our nearly four decades of efforts to get recognition for haemophilia at the national level," he said.

"I am hopeful that this award will help haemophilics get quality healthcare across the country. Treatment must be available easily for patients of rare blood disorders, including haemophilia".

Selfless service to women & the weaker sections

S G Susheelamma is involved in women empowerment, child care and welfare of the economically weaker sections of society.

S G Susheelamma

Born in May 1939, she founded Sumangali Seva Ashrama in October 1975 to serve abadoned women, orphaned children and the poor.

Located in Cholanayakanahalli near Hebbal, the nonprofit trains women in the crafts, conducts vocational courses, entrepreneurship awareness programmes, spiritual activities and provides legal aid and higher education assistance to them. She was earlier conferred with the Karnataka Rajyotsava award.

"I have never aspired for any recognition, but God has been kind to me with his many blessings. The ashrama was founded by a group of women with an intention to serve society. I have spent 50 years in social service. Because of the support from all private individuals, companies and the government, we were able to start various initiatives including women empowerment, child care and community development," she said.

He made Prestige cooker a household name

The late TT Jagannathan, popularly known as 'Kitchen Mogul', has been awarded Padmashri posthumously in trade and industry category.

He invented the GRS safety mechanism for pressure cookers, exported Indian cookware globally and headed the renowned TTK Prestige Group for decades.

TT Jagannathan

He also made significant contributions to healthcare, sanitation and education. He was chairman emeritus of TTK Prestige when he died at 77 in Oct last.

As one who was on the board of TTK Prestige for 50 years, Jagannathan made the Prestige cooker brand a household name in India. He played a key role in turning around TTK Group and making it debt-free. Prestige also expanded to markets like US & UK under his watch.

He authored the popular book 'Disrupt & Conquer - How TTK Prestige Became A Billion Dollar Company'.

A gold medallist from IIT Madras & a PhD in operations from Cornell University, USA, he was a man who loved to cook & had remarked that his need to innovate always began in the kitchen.

ADGP Devajyoti Ray among winners of President's medal

3 from fire force chosen for gallantry medals; meritorious service medals for 27

BENGALURU, DHNS

An additional director general of police (ADGP) from Karnataka is among 33 officers from police, fire, home guards and civil defence, and correctional services to be chosen for gallantry/service medals on the occasion of Republic Day.

According to the list released on Sunday, ADGP Devajyoti Ray has been selected for the President's medal for distinguished service (PSM), along with Rangappa Thimmappa, assistant commissioner of police, and Pradeep Kumar Rangaswamy Holenarasipura, senior platoon commander (home guards and civil defence).

K V Manjunatha, regional fire officer; Hemanth Kumar D, fireman; and Mallikarjuna, fireman, have been chosen for the medal for gallantry (GM).

The following will receive the medal for meritorious service (MSM): **Amit Singh**, inspector general of police; **Chetan Singh Rathor**, inspector general of police; **Seema Latkar**, commissioner of police, Mysuru; **Savitha Srinivas**, superintendent of police; **Puttamadaiah M**, superintendent of police; **Nagappa Naveen Kumar**, additional superintendent of police; **Raja Imam Kasim Pinjar**, deputy commissioner of police; **Hanamantharay**, deputy superintendent of police; **Chambanil Abraham Simon**, superintendent of police; **Mohamad M A**, inspector; **Shivaswamy Chowdena Halli Basavaraju**, inspector; **Mahamadrafhik Maliksab Tahasildar**, inspector; **Shrishail Kenchappa Byakod**, inspector; Kashinath B, sub-inspector; **Violet Femina**, sub-inspector; **Shakunthala H K**, sub-inspector; **Huchappa Dodda Erappa**, head constable; **Harsha Nagaraja**, assistant sub-inspector; **Basavaraj Myageri**, head constable; **Siddaraju G**, assistant sub-inspector; **Guruswamy**, assistant fire station officer; **Arun C Naik**, leading fireman; **Sunand Sampath**, officer commanding; **Balaji Srinivasan**, officer commanding; **Malaligowda**, platoon commander; **Vadiraj Narayan Rao Deshpande**, platoon commander; and **Paramesh H A**, assistant superintendent.

Devajyoti Ray

Seema Latkar

Chetan Singh Rathor

Amit Singh

Raja Imam Kasim P

PADMA GLOW TO PERSONALITIES WHO COVERED COUNTRY IN GLORY

Padma Vibhushan (5)

1 **Dharmendra Singh Deol (Posthumous),** Art Maharashtra
2 **K T Thomas,** Public Affairs, Kerala
3 **N Rajam,** Art, Uttar Pradesh
4 **P Narayanan,** Literature and Education Kerala
5 **V S Achuthanandhan (Posthumous),** Public Affairs, Kerala

Padma Bhushan (13)

6 **Alka Yagnik,** Art, Maharashtra
7 **Bhagat Singh Koshyari,** Public Affairs, Uttarakhand
8 **Kallipatti Ramasamy Palaniswamy,** Medicine, Tamil Nadu
9 **Mammootty,** Art, Kerala
10 **Dr Nori Dattatreyudu,** Medicine, United States of America
11 **Piyush Pandey (Posthumous),** Art, Maharashtra
12 **SKM Maeilanandhan,** Social Work, Tamil Nadu
13 **Shatavadhani, R Ganesh,** Art, Karnataka
14 **Shibu Soren (Posthumous),** Public Affairs, Jharkhand
15 **Uday Kotak,** Trade and Industry, Maharashtra
16 **V K Malhotra (Posthumous),** Public Affairs, Delhi
17 **Vellappally Natesan,** Public Affairs, Kerala
18 **Vijay Amritraj,** Sports, United States of America

Padma Shri (113)

19 **A E Muthunayagam,** Science and Engineering, Kerala
20 **Anil Kumar Rastogi,** Art, UP
21 **Anke Gowda M,** Social Work, Karnataka
22 **Armida Fernandez,** Medicine, Maharashtra
23 **Arvind Vaidya,** Art, Gujarat
24 **Ashok Khade,** Trade and Industry, Maharashtra
25 **Ashok Kumar Singh,** Science and Engineering, UP
26 **Asok Kumar Haldar,** Literature and Education, West Bengal
27 **Baldev Singh,** Sports, Punjab
28 **Bhagwandas Raikwar,** Sports, Madhya Pradesh
29 **Bharat Singh Bharti,** Art ,Bihar
30 **Bhiklya Ladakya Dhinda,** Art, Maharashtra
31 **Bishwa Bandhu (Posthumous),** Art, Bihar
32 **Brij Lal Bhat,** Social Work, J&K
33 **Buddha Rashmi Mani,** Others - Archaeology, UP
34 **Dr Budhri Tati,** Social Work, Chhattisgarh
35 **Chandramouli Gaddamanugu,** Science and Engineering, Telangana
36 **Charan Hembram,** Literature and Education, Odisha
37 **Chiranji Lal Yadav,** Art, UP
38 **Deepika Reddy,** Art, Telangana
39 **Dharmiklal Chunilal Pandya,** Art, Gujarat
40 **Gadde Babu Rajendra Prasad,** Art, Andhra Pradesh
41 **Gafruddin Mewati Jogi,** Art, Rajasthan
42 **Gambir Singh Yonzone,** Literature and Education, West Bengal
43 **Garimella Balakrishna Prasad (Posthumous),** Art, Andhra Pradesh
44 **Gayatri Balasubramanian** and **Ranjani Balasubramanian (Duo)***, Art, Tamil Nadu
45 **Gopal Ji Trivedi,** Science and Engineering, Bihar
46 **Guduru Venkat Rao,** Medicine, Telangana
47 **H V Hande,** Medicine, Tamil Nadu
48 **Hally War,** Social Work, Meghalaya
49 **Hari Madhab Mukhopadhyay (Posthumous),** Art, West Bengal
50 **Haricharan Saikia,** Art, Assam
51 **Harmanpreet Kaur Bhullar,** Sports, Punjab
52 **Inderjit Singh Sidhu,** Social Work, Chandigarh
53 **Janardan Bapurao Bothe,** Social Work, Maharashtra
54 **Jogesh Deuri Others,** Agriculture, Assam
55 **Juzer Vasi,** Science and Engineering, Maharashtra
56 **Jyotish Debnath,** Art, West Bengal
57 **K Pajanivel,** Sports, Puducherry
58 **K Ramasamy,** Science and Engineering, Tamil Nadu
59 **K Vijay Kumar,** Civil Service, Tamil Nadu
60 **Kabindra Purkayastha (Posthumous),** Public Affairs, Assam
61 **Kailash Chandra Pant,** Literature and Education, Madhya Pradesh
62 **Kalamandalam Vimala Menon,** Art, Kerala
63 **Kewal Krishan Thakral,** Medicine, Uttar Pradesh
64 **Khem Raj Sundriyal,** Art, Haryana
65 **Kollakal Devaki Amma G,** Social Work, Kerala
66 **Krishnamurty Balasubramanian,** Science and Engineering, Telangana
67 **Kumar Bose,** Art, West Bengal
68 **Kumarasamy Thangaraj,** Science and Engineering, Telangana
69 **Prof (Dr) Lars-Christian,** Koch Art, Germany
70 **Liudmila Viktorovna Khokhlova,** Literature and Education, Russia
71 **Madhavan Ranganathan,** Art, Maharashtra
72 **Maganti Murali Mohan,** Art, Andhra Pradesh
73 **Mahendra Kumar Mishra,** Literature and Education, Odisha
74 **Mahendra Nath Roy,** Literature and Education, West Bengal
75 **Mamidala Jagadesh Kumar,** Literature and Education, Delhi
76 **Mangala Kapoor,** Literature and Education, Uttar Pradesh
77 **Mir Hajibhai Kasambhai,** Art, Gujarat
78 **Mohan Nagar,** Social Work, Madhya Pradesh
79 **Narayan Vyas & Others,** Archaeology, Madhya Pradesh
80 **Naresh Chandra Dev Varma,** Literature and Education, Tripura
81 **Nilesh Vinodchandra Mandlewala,** Social Work, Gujarat
82 **Nuruddin Ahmed,** Art, Assam
83 **Othuvaar Thiruthani Swaminathan,** Art, Tamil Nadu
84 **Dr. Padma Gurmet,** Medicine, Ladakh
85 **Palkonda Vijay Anand Reddy,** Medicine, Telangana
86 **Ms. Pokhila Lekthepi Art Assam**
87 **Dr. Prabhakar Basavprabhu Kore,** Literature and Education, Karnataka
88 **Prateek Sharma,** Medicine, United States of America
89 **Praveen Kumar,** Sports, Uttar Pradesh
90 **Prem Lal Gautam,** Science and Engineering Himachal Pradesh
91 **Prosenjit Chatterjee,** Art West Bengal
92 **Dr. Punniamurthy Natesan,** Medicine Tamil Nadu
93 **R Krishnan (Posthumous),** Art Tamil Nadu
94 **R V S Mani,** Civil Service Delhi
95 **Rabilal Tudu,** Literature and Education, West Bengal
96 **Raghupat Singh, (Posthumous),** Others - Agriculture, Uttar Pradesh
97 **Raghuveer Tukaram Khedkar,** Art, Maharashtra
98 **Rajastapathi Kaliappa Goundar,** Art, Tamil Nadu
99 **Rajendra Prasad,** Medicine, Uttar Pradesh
100 **Rama Reddy Mamidi (Posthumous) & Others,** Animal Husbandry, Telangana
101 **Ramamurthy Sreedher,** Others - Radio Broadcasting, Delhi
102 **Ramchandra Godbole** and **Suneeta Godbole (Duo)*,** Medicine, Chhattisgarh
103 **Ratilal Borisagar,** Literature and Education, Gujarat
104 **Rohit Sharma,** Sports, Maharashtra
105 **S G Susheelamma,** Social Work, Karnataka
106 **Sangyusang S Pongener,** Art, Nagaland
107 **Sant Niranjan Dass,** Others -Spiritualism, Punjab
108 **Sarat Kumar Patra,** Art, Odisha
109 **Saroj Mandal,** Medicine, West Bengal
110 **Satish Shah (Posthumous),** Art, Maharashtra
111 **Satyanarayan Nuwal,** Trade and Industry, Maharashtra
112 **Savita Punia,** Sports, Haryana
113 **Prof. Shafi Shauq,** Literature and Education, Jammu and Kashmir
114 **Shashi Shekhar Vempati,** Literature and Education, Karnataka
115 **Shrirang Devaba Lad,** Others - Agriculture, Maharashtra
116 **Shubha Venkatesha Iyengar,** Science and Engineering, Karnataka
117 **Shyam Sundar,** Medicine, Uttar Pradesh
118 **Simanchal Patro,** Art, Odisha
119 **Sivasankari,** Literature and Education, Tamil Nadu
120 **Dr. Suresh Hanagavadi,** Medicine, Karnataka
121 **Swami Brahmdev Ji Maharaj,** Social Work, Rajasthan
122 **T T Jagannathan (Posthumous),** Trade and Industry, Karnataka
123 **Taga Ram Bheel,** Art, Rajasthan
124 **Tarun Bhattacharya,** Art, West Bengal
125 **Techi Gubin,** Social Work, Arunachal Pradesh
126 **Thiruvaarur Bakthavathsalam,** Art, Tamil Nadu
127 **Tripti Mukherjee,** Art, West Bengal
128 **Veezhinathan Kamakoti,** Science and Engineering, Tamil Nadu
129 **Vempaty Kutumba Sastry,** Literature and Education, Andhra Pradesh
130 **Vladimer Mestvirishvili (Posthumous),** Sports, Georgia
131 **Yumnam Jatra Singh (Posthumous),** Art Manipur

Note: *In Duo case, the Award is counted as one.

Cong will come to power in 2028, reiterates CM

MYSURU, DHNS: Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday reiterated that the Congress will come to power in 2028. However, the decision on leadership is left to the high command, he said.

He was speaking to reporters at Mysuru airport.

Siddaramaiah

Siddaramaiah said that the budget meetings will begin on February 1. "We have already begun preliminary discussions with the Finance department," he said.

On Guv's report to Prez

On Governor's report to the President on his speech to the joint session of the legislature, the CM said, "He has informed about it. Sections 176 and 163 of Constitution mandates that the Governor shall read the speech written by the state government and he will have no discretion".

CELEBRATING THE INDIA WE WERE, THE INDIA WE ARE, AND THE INDIA WE ARE BECOMING.

Before India became a Republic, it was already exchanging ideas, skills, and goods.
From hand to hand, village to village, generation to generation. And through it all,
our art kept our thoughts, stories, and spirit alive. Like Kalamkari art, where each stroke told
a story of work, travel, and patience. Today, the way we transact has changed.
From grains to clicks, from coins to cards, from age-old barter to scans. UPI, NETC FASTag,
RuPay, IMPS and many of NPCI's products have become the new way to pay,
keeping India #AlwaysForward.

This Republic Day, SCAN the QR code and witness India's journey of transaction and exchange through Kalamkari art.

NPCI भारतीय राष्ट्रीय भुगतान निगम NATIONAL PAYMENTS CORPORATION OF INDIA | ALWAYS FORWARD

UPI UNIFIED PAYMENTS INTERFACE | RuPay | NETC NATIONAL ELECTRONIC TOLL COLLECTION FASTag Easy to Cruise | IMPS IMMEDIATE PAYMENT SERVICE | AePS AADHAAR ENABLED PAYMENT SYSTEM | BHIM BHARAT INTERFACE FOR MONEY | Bharat Connect | NPCI INTERNATIONAL

FIR against Kerehalli over social media post on top cop

BENGALURU, DHNS

Bengaluru police have registered a suo motu case after a "false news" was spread on social media about Director General and Inspector General of Police (DG&IGP) M A Saleem.

According to the FIR, a police officer monitoring social media received an alert that murder-accused Puneeth Kerehalli and five of his associates had visited a place near Soladevanahalli belonging to one Sakeena Taslim on January 22.

Kerehalli, who was recently arrested for skipping court hearings, made allegations that the said person had trafficked Bangladeshis to Bengaluru and arranged illegal accommodation for them. Kerehalli also spread false news that the place where this incident is occurring is a 'Benami' property of Saleem.

Further, claiming that Bangladeshi Muslims are residing illegally in Bengaluru, Kerehalli made a live video and circulated it on social media platforms like Facebook. "By doing so, he is inciting the public, disturbing the peace of society by harming public tranquillity, and acting in a manner detrimental to communal harmony," the FIR noted.

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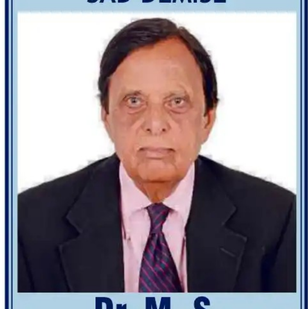
SAD DEMISE



Dr. M. S. MAHADEVIAH
DoB-1/3/1934 - DoD-25/1/2026
Body leaves residence at 2 pm
Address: 518, 10th Cross, RMV Extension, Sadashivnagar, Bangalore - 560 080.
Cremation on 26/1/2026, 3.00 pm at Harishchandra Ghat, Srirampuram.
Deeply Mourned by:
FAMILY AND FRIENDS

DCM announces mobility grid in all cities for future growth

'At Davos, 45 firms expressed interest to invest in K'taka'

BENGALURU, DHNS

Back from his visit to the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Sunday hailed Switzerland as 'heaven' and stated that the state government would work towards developing a mobility grid in all cities of Karnataka by keeping in mind a horizon of 25 years.

"As cities are becoming urbanised, investors are keen to understand the government's response to meet infrastructure demand. In this backdrop, we have decided to develop a mobility grid by notifying the areas for future roads well in advance," Shivakumar said, praising the road network, traffic discipline, railway lines and weather of Switzerland.

The deputy CM said a meeting of Urban Development, Revenue and Panchayat Raj ministers would soon be called to formalise the plan on mobility grid. During the event, Shivakumar said, a total of 45 companies expressed interest to invest in Karnataka.

"We decided not to sign any agreements with investors in Davos but invited them to participate in the Global Investors' Meet. Many investors are excited about the artificial intelligence (AI) city we are planning in Bidadi.

D K Shivakumar.

Tunnel roads

Davos, he said, is twice the size of Sadashivanagar. "All world leaders preferred to walk a short distance of 1-2 km because of the long traffic jams. Even the airport was about 200 km away. During my road trip from Zurich, I passed through 40-50 tunnels. Some of them were short and a few were as long as 20 km," he said, indirectly defending his own proposal to build the controversial tunnel road in Bengaluru.

"I discussed the tunnel project with the Maharashtra chief minister as he is building a lot of tunnels. They have some suggestions about parking facilities near tunnels. We would like to visit some of the tunnel projects in Maharashtra," he said, adding that the government would approach the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for a loan towards building the second tunnel road (east-west corridor).

Shivakumar said billionaire Elon Musk had a company that manufactures tunnel-boring machines but their diameter was 3-6 metres.

"These machines are suited for metro projects but tunnel roads need bigger ones," he said.

He reiterated that the world is looking at India through Bengaluru. "New Delhi was facing problems with air pollution. Mumbai does not have the IT-related workforce and human resource that Bengaluru enjoys. This is our biggest asset," he said, stating that inquiries from investors were most related to data centers, global capability centers, aviation, food and beverage, renewable energy, electrical vehicles (EVs), etc.

Enough land in 40-km radius of KIA: DCM

"Many companies asked us to look into the ease of doing business and the lengthy process of getting approvals. We are planning to achieve 'speed of doing business' by ensuring approvals are done quickly," Shivakumar said.

"Some people were interested in the Race Course but I have declined such requests. I have told them that there are enough lands within the 40-km radius of the Bengaluru airport."

Won't allow govt to 'illegally' acquire land: HDK

BENGALURU, DHNS: Union Heavy Industries and Steel Minister HD Kumaraswamy said on Sunday that he wouldn't allow the state government to "illegally" acquire fertile land around Bidadi.

Participating in a protest by farmers from Byramangala and Kanchuganahalli villages, he said: "It's my responsibility to protect the land of my sisters. Let's not leave even an inch of land. You need not be afraid, I am there with you. Come what may, let's face it."

Stating that the township he had planned was different from what was now being planned by the Congress government, he said: "Don't compare me with them. When people were against it, I immediately stopped it. Then, the land value here was within Rs one lakh. I called all of you to my office in Krishna and discussed. That's my morality. But they (Congress leaders) are not ready to face the people."

Traffic diversions in Varthur today

BENGALURU, DHNS: In view of the Sri Channarayaswamy Jatra scheduled till Tuesday at Varthur, under the jurisdiction of the Whitefield Traffic Police Station, the following traffic arrangements have been put in place.

Alternative routes for light vehicles:

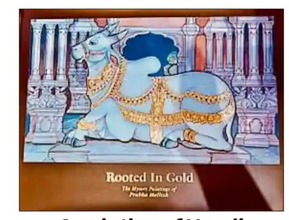
- **From Gunjur towards Whitefield:** Vehicles can take a right turn near Sri Ram Temple, Gunjur, and proceed towards Whitefield via Halasahalli Road, Maduranagar, Surahunase, Valepura and Varthur Government College Road.
- **From Whitefield towards Gunjur:** Vehicles can ply via Immadihalli, Valepura–Surahunase Road, Maduranagar, towards Gunjur and the Varthur police station.
- **From Gunjur towards Kundalahalli and Marathahalli:** Vehicles should take the Gunjur KFC Road, Panathur Railway Bridge and VIBGYOR School Road.

Alternative routes for heavy goods vehicles (HGVs):

- **From Hoskote:** HGVs can proceed via Hopefarm Junction and Channasandra, and move towards Sarjapur via Varthur Kodi.
- **From Sarjapur:** HGVs should use Chikka Tirupathi Road via Dommasandra, Kodati and Bellandur.
- **BMTC buses from Gunjur Depot 41 towards Gunjur–Varthur:** Buses can ply via Hosahalli, Maduranagar, Varthur and Nerige Road.

WINGED FRIENDS

Cattle egrets accompany a farmer busy tilling his land at Kadlebalu village in Davangere taluk on Sunday. DH PHOTO/SATISH BADIGER



A painting of Nandi features on the cover of 'Rooted in Gold–The Mysore Paintings' by Prabha Mallesh, launched on Sunday.

Rooted in gold: New book showcases Prabha Mallesh's art journey

BENGALURU, DHNS: A new book showcasing the life's work of veteran artist Prabha Mallesh was launched on Sunday.

The 150-page book, titled 'Rooted in Gold—The Timeless Art of Mysore Paintings', features over 130 works by the 83-year-old painter, selected from more than 600 paintings she has created over five decades.

It was launched on Sunday by Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath president BL Shankar, artist Chandranath Acharya, former IAS officer Chiranjeevi Singh and dancer Lakshmi Gopalaswamy.

Prabha began her artistic journey at her home in Chikkamagaluru, painting without formal guidance or training. Post marriage, she received structured training from Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath and went on to fully embrace the Mysore style.

Her works are known for their depiction of Hindu deities, mythological narratives and temple scenes. She has painted the entire Ramayana, with two of her works later selected by the state government for postcards.

103 Tamil-medium students have 28 teachers in Shivamogga

NRUPATHUNGA SK
SHIVAMOGGA, DHNS

Nine state-run Tamil-medium schools in Shivamogga district cumulatively boast a strength of 103 students. Notwithstanding the poor student strength, these schools, however, appear to have a surfeit of teachers – 28, to be precise – at a time when several Kannada-medium schools are struggling without enough teachers.

These schools – five of which are in Bhadravathi and the remaining four are in Shivamogga – were once seen as a godsend for the Tamil community in the district. But with most Tamil parents enrolling their children at private schools, enrolment at the state-run institutions has plummeted, pushing them to the brink of closure.

There are only five students at the Tamil Higher Primary School on the New Town Junction Road in Shivamogga, but these kids have three teachers. Similarly, there are three teachers for 13 students at the Tamil-medium school at Vishwanagar.

Deputy Director of School Education and Literacy for Shivamogga district Manjunath S R admitted to *DH* that enrolment at the Tamil-medium schools was on a downward spiral.

"But they cannot be shut till the strength drops to zero. Teachers serving at these schools completed their BEd degrees in Tamil. If the need arises, these teachers will be deputed to other schools," said Manjunath.

On the disproportionate strength of teachers at these schools, he said they were needed to teach Mathematics, Science, Social Science and Tamil.

"Most of the students in these schools hail from the underprivileged sections of society. Their parents have enrolled their kids at these schools out of pride in their Tamil identity. However, not all Tamil parents are sending their kids to these schools, with many opting to enrol their children at English-medium institutions," he added.

Meant to give young ones a voice, kids' gram sabhas are a mere ritual

SHILPA P
MYSURU, DHNS

Only some gram panchayats (GPs) in the state are holding gram sabhas for children, even 20 years after the government passed an order in this regard.

But even when they are held, they remain a mere formality.

The rural development and panchayat raj (RDPR) department passed an order in 2006, to conduct two children's gram sabhas under each GP over 10 weeks, around Children's Day (November 14) every year.

These sabhas help understand children's woes and their needs, experts said.

"The challenges faced by children today are no longer restricted to child marriage and child labour. They have taken new forms in the digital era like mobile phone addiction, abuse of children via internet, peer pressure and teenage pregnancy. Such sabhas play a significant role in kids being heard by officials of the department of health, women and child development, police and others. They should be held in open spaces by involving the public," said Vasudeva Sharma, director of Child Rights Trust.

A file photo a children's gram sabha. Such meetings, organised by GPs, help officials of the departments concerned and the police understand the needs and grievances of the young ones.

Between Apr 2024 and May 2025, only 55% of the GPs held kids' gram sabhas.

In the 5,958 GPs in the state, only 3,309 children's gram sabhas were held. In Mysuru, among 256 GPs, only 71 meetings were organised.

Among 84 GPs in Bengaluru Urban district, only 47 kids' gram sabhas were held. The highest of 313 sabhas were held in Belagavi district, followed by 259 in Shivamogga and 178 in Uttara Kannada. The least of 21 were held in Yadgir. However, their numbers have improved compared to the previous year. In 2023-24, among the 5,958 GPs, only 894 children's gram sabhas were held.

"Instead of inviting children from all schools under a GP, officials just visit one school and hold the sabha. Allocation of funds for such meetings is not adequate," sources said.

"GPs can utilise funds generated via property tax collection and so on for such sabhas," said Sathish Kumar, a Mysurean.

Venkatesh, member of the Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights said, "We have committees at different levels. But they should function effectively. To inspire officials, Minister for RDPR Priyank Kharge started holding gram sabhas for children virtually, on a pilot basis".

Sharma said that the government should involve NGOs to hold these sabhas effectively.

Officials said that the Panchayat Raj commissionerate organises training on children's gram sabhas for taluk panchayat executive officers and panchayat development officers, involving officials related to children's welfare and two children from each GP.

During the campaign, they are supposed to hold sports meets, cultural programmes and story telling events to create awareness among kids about their rights and regarding child helplines like 1098 and 112. Officials are supposed to invite petitions from kids via letters, Facebook pages of GPs, besides complaint boxes at schools and GP offices.

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BASKING IN GLORY: Neonatologist, cleanliness crusader & geneticist among awardees

Unsung and unstoppable, 45 heroes win Padma Shri

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

A neonatologist who set up Asia's first human milk bank, an 88-year-old former IPS officer leading a cleanliness drive and a geneticist involved in national genome initiatives are among 45 unsung heroes chosen for the Padma Shri on the eve of Republic Day.

Recipients of the country's fourth-highest civilian award also include those who have worked to promote tribal languages and indigenous martial arts, preserve dying arts and traditional weaves, and safeguard India's ecological wealth.

Armida Fernandez, a Mumbai-based neonatologist, has been honoured for her work in reducing infant mortality from 70% to 12% through targeted interventions. She established Asia's first human milk bank and has trained over 2,000 nurses and doctors, transforming paediatric care in the country.

Inderjit Singh Sidhu, a former IPS officer, has been chosen for the Padma award at the age of 88 for his efforts to keep Chandigarh clean. A cleanliness warrior, he collects roadside litter in a cycle-cart.

Eminent geneticist Dr Kumarasamy Thangaraj from Hyderabad has been named among the Padma Shri awardees for his contributions to the field of genetics over the past three decades. Internationally known for redefining Indian genetic history, tracing early human migration from Africa, and linking population genetics to disease risks, he has driven national genome initiatives and rare disease missions.

For pioneering the Bastar Rural Health Care project in naxal-affected areas, the Godbole couple—Sunita and Ramachandra—have also been chosen for the Padma Shri. They provided affordable healthcare to over one lakh tribals under challenging circumstances and nutritional support to anaemic children.

Tamil veterinary scientist Punniamurthy Natesan has been awarded the Padma Shri for pioneering scientific ethno-veterinary medicine and validating hundreds of herbal protocols. He integrated Siddha traditions and livestock knowledge with modern science.

Shyam Sundar, the doctor who developed the inexpensive K-39 rapid test for faster diagnosis, and Meghalaya-based Hally War, recognised for his afforestation efforts, are also among the awardees.

Raghupat Singh, a farmer from Uttar Pradesh with five decades of experience, has been honoured for developing around 100 plant varieties, including a 1.5-metre-long bottle gourd.

K Devaki Amma of Kerala was honoured for her environmental initiatives, which included transforming coastal sandy land into a thriving green ecosystem with 3,000 indigenous and medicinal plants.

Bundeli war art trainer Bhagwandas Raikwar from Madhya Pradesh, 90-year-old tribal Tarpa player Bhiklya Ladakya Dhinda from Maharashtra—who plays the traditional instrument made of bottle gourd and bamboo — Jammu and Kashmir social worker Brij Lal Bhat, and Budri Thati, who established schools in Naxal-affected areas of Chhattisgarh, are also among the winners.

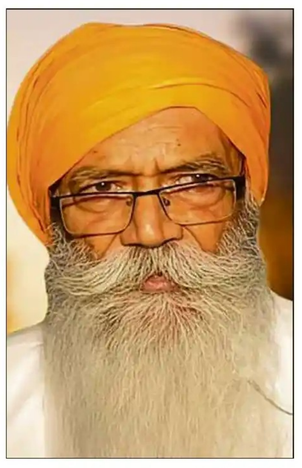
Santhali author-composer Charan Hembram from Odisha, brass engraving expert Chiranji Lal Yadav from Moradabad, 'Maanbhatt' exponent Dharmiklal Chunilal Pandya, and Puducherry's K Pajanivel, recognised for nurturing Silambam, have also been chosen for the Padma Shri.

STORIES OF SERVICE

- **Armida Fernandez (Mumbai): Neonatologist who set up Asia's first human milk bank**
- **Inderjit Singh Sidhu (Chandigarh): Former IPS officer honoured at 88 for cleanliness drive**
- **Dr Kumarasamy Thangaraj (Hyderabad): Geneticist who redefined Indian genetic history**
- **Sunita & Ramachandra Godbole (Chhattisgarh): Pioneered tribal healthcare project in Naxal-affected areas**
- **Punniamurthy Natesan (Tamil Nadu): Veterinary scientist who pioneered ethno-veterinary medicine**
- **Shyam Sundar (Varanasi): Developed K-39 rapid test for faster diagnosis**

Armida Fernandez, medicine, Maharashtra.

SKM Maeilanandhan, social work, Tamil Nadu.



Inderjit Singh Sidhu, social work, Chandigarh.

Honour for Veerappan slayer

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

K Vijay Kumar, who was conferred with Padma Shri award on Sunday, is a decorated IPS officer, best known for leading Operation Cocoon in 2004 that resulted in the death of forest brigand Veerappan, whose name spelled terror in parts of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

The 73-year-old Tamil Nadu-cadre IPS officer, who headed the Central Reserve Police Force for two years from 2010, had also served as advisor to the Union Home Ministry on countering Left-wing extremism areas, and to the Jammu and Kashmir Governor.

Vijay Kumar had been involved in the operations to hunt Veerappan on various occasions and in different capacities. He first assisted the then Special Task Force (STF) chief Walter Issac Devaram and then was appointed to head the same force in 2003 after he was shunted out from Chennai as its police commissioner.

The seasoned IPS officer, while heading the STF, won the trust of the locals and played a key role in cutting Veerappan's supply line of material and information. His plan to plant an informer in the inner circle of Veerappan and bring him out of the jungle paid rich dividends as the forest brigand landed in a well-laid trap.

Veerappan was confronted by the STF team in a terrain where the security personnel had an upper hand – the encounter ended in the death of Veerappan and his aides in Papparapatti in Dharmapuri district on October 18, 2004.

After informing the then Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa over the phone about the killing of Veerappan, Vijay Kumar drove to the Bannari Amman Temple in Erode district to shave off his head.

In 2010, when P Chidambaram was Union Home Minister, Vijay Kumar was appointed as the Director-General of CRPF and was involved in several operations to combat extremism.

Veerappan earned notoriety for poaching elephants, smuggling sandalwood, kidnapping high-profile people like Kannada Thespian Raj Kumar and former minister Nagappa, and killing policemen and others who came his way. The bandit ran an empire inside the forests.

HEMANT SOREN
Jharkhand Chief Minister

"In the hearts and minds of the people of Jharkhand, and from Ladakh to Kerala, from Rajasthan to Assam, among the tribal communities across the country, late Baba Dishom Guru Shibu Soren ji - the true son of Mother India- is, has been, and will forever remain a Bharat Ratna.

RAGHUVEER KHEDKAR
Folk artist

"I have spent 53 yrs of my life in this art form and perform on stage even today. This honour will encourage young artistes. They will realise that even in folk art, one can receive a Padma award.

KAILASH CHANDRA PANT
Senior journalist, litterateur

"This is a matter of pride for all Hindi speakers. This is also a testament to a Hindi magazine's influence & scale.

JOGESH DEURI
Sericulturist, Assam

"Assam is famous for its 'Muga' silk, but it is Eri that has immense potential and is the future. Eri is inextricably linked to our tradition and identity. I want to take Eri to the global platform.

Natesan's selection raises political stakes in Kerala

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS: Several Malayalis, including former chief minister and CPM leader VS Achuthanandan and actor Mammootty, have been selected for the Padma awards, but the choice of Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (SNDP) general secretary Vellappally Natesan (Padma Bhushan) carries political significance in poll-bound Kerala.

The SNDP is a forum representing the Hindu Ezhava community, the largest Hindu group in the state. The CPM has voiced concerns over the drift of Ezhavas, an OBC community, towards the BJP in recent elections.

Natesan also recently announced the SNDP's decision to associate with the Nair Service Society (NSS), which represents the Hindu Nair community—the state's second-largest Hindu group and a forward caste.

Natesan's son Thushar Vellappally, who has been entrusted with the task of initiating talks with the NSS, is the president of the Bharath Dharma Jana Sena, a key coalition partner of the BJP in Kerala.

Natesan's recent communally toned remarks had triggered allegations that he was trying to help the BJP in the elections.

The decision to confer the Padma Bhushan on Natesan has political significance, as it could boost the BJP's influence within the Ezhava community.

The award to Natesan could also spark controversy, as he has faced investigations into the alleged misappropriation of SNDP's microfinance funds and was charge-sheeted in a Rs 50-lakh financial misappropriation case. He was also investigated in 2022 in connection with the suicide abetment of a former SNDP staff member.

Of the five Padma Vibhushan recipients this year, three are from Kerala. In addition to VS Achuthanandan, Justice KT Thomas and P Narayanan have also been selected for the honour.

PM urges Indian industry & startups to focus on quality

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Calling on the Indian industry to produce top-class products, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday urged manufacturers to produce zero-defect products.

Narendra Modi

Industry and start-ups must focus on quality and resolve to make excellence a benchmark in manufacturing, the PM said in his 130th Mann ki Baat address.

"Let us resolve that there will be no laxity on quality, nor will there be any compromise on quality. And I had expressed from Red Fort—'Zero Defect, Zero Effect'. Only by doing this shall we be able to accelerate the journey towards a Viksit Bharat," the PM said.

He hailed the efforts of youngsters who participated in India's startup journey that began 10 years ago in 2016. "Twoday, India has turned into the third-largest startup ecosystem in the world. These startups are out of the box; they are working in sectors that were unimaginable even 10 years ago," Modi said.

"AI, space, nuclear energy, semiconductors, mobility, green hydrogen, biotechnology... You name it, and you'll find one Indian startup or the other working in that sector. I salute all my young friends associated with one startup or the other or want to start one of their own," the prime minister said.

Kerala's 'grandmother of forests' awarded for green legacy

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

What began as a hobby of planting saplings on her farmland 45 years ago has earned 92-year-old Kollakkayil Devaki Amma a series of honours, the latest being the Padma Shri, for developing a forest and sending a powerful message on the need to protect nature.

Spread over five acres near the Arabian Sea at Muthukulam in Kerala's Alappuzha district, the 'Thapovanam' forest is home to hundreds of varieties of rare and indigenous trees, plants, shrubs and creepers. It has grown into a rich repository of medicinal plants and a favourite destination for researchers studying biodiversity, botany and global warming.

Paddy to trees

An accident in her forties changed the course of Devaki Amma's life. Unable to continue paddy cultivation on her farmland, she began planting a variety of saplings with the support of her husband Gopalakrishna Pillai, and other friends and relatives.

Today, her forest hosts hundreds of species, ranging from common varieties like teak and mahogany to rare ones such as Lakshmitharu and Chinese orange.

'Thapovanam' has also become a haven for migratory birds, while its serene landscape attracts nature lovers and tourists. Devaki Amma is now a respected speaker at environmental events.

Devaki Amma

Popularly known as Vanamuttashi (grandmother of forests), she has already received several honours, including the Indira Priyadarshini Vriksha Mitra award and the Nari Shakti award.

Expressing her joy at being selected for the Padma award, she told reporters that she considers it a true recognition of her work. She said she planted whatever saplings she could find from different places.

"Even I do not know all the plants here. Often, people searching for rare plants come and tell me that they have found endangered species of trees and plants here," she said.

She often reminds visitors to 'Thapovanam' that the forest environment continues to keep her healthy despite age-related challenges, and urges everyone to plant at least one tree on their own premises.

In 2018, the Union government honoured her with the Nari Shakti Puraskar, which was presented by then President Ram Nath Kovind.

(With PTI inputs)

India a messenger of peace in conflict-ridden world: Murmu

Says path to 'Viksit Bharat' must be inclusive

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

President Droupadi Murmu addresses the nation on the eve of the 77th Republic Day. PTI

Amid geopolitical tensions across the globe, President Droupadi Murmu on Sunday said India is spreading the message of peace in the world, which is crucial to secure the future of humanity.

"In an atmosphere marked by conflicts in many parts of the world, India is spreading the message of peace," she said in her address to the nation on the eve of the 77th Republic Day.

In her address, the president spoke on many issues, including Operation Sindoor and women's empowerment, Vande Mataram, and the country's economy.

"In our tradition, we have been offering prayers for peace to prevail in the universe. The future of humanity can remain secure only if there is peace in the whole world," she said.

Highlighting the recent success of Operation Sindoor, she said. "Last year, our country launched precision strikes against terror infrastructure... terror centres were destroyed, and many terrorists met their end."

"Based on the strength of the army, air force, and navy, people have complete trust in our defence preparedness," she said, linking the military readiness to India's ability to advocate for peace from a position of strength.

In her address, President Murmu hailed the rise of "nari shakti" (women power) as the cornerstone of India's journey toward becoming a developed nation by 2047. She emphasised that the "active and empowered participation of women is extremely important for the development of the country".

The president emphasised that the path to a 'Viksit Bharat' must be inclusive, with special focus placed on tribal and marginalised communities through targeted interventions.

Ashoka Chakra for Shubhanshu Shukla; Shaurya Chakra for 2 women navy officers

NEW DELHI, PTI: Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, who created history by becoming the first Indian to set foot on the International Space Station (ISS), was on Sunday awarded the Ashoka Chakra, India's highest peacetime gallantry award.

Lt Cdr Dilna K and Lt Cdr Roopa A. PTI

Shubhanshu Shukla

In June last year, Shukla became the second Indian to have gone to space and the first to visit the ISS as part of the historic Axiom-4 mission. His 18-day space odyssey came 41 years after cosmonaut Rakesh Sharma flew aboard the Russian Soyuz-11 space mission.

On the eve of the Republic Day, President Droupadi Murmu approved gallantry awards to 70 armed forces personnel, including six who would receive the honour posthumously.

These include one Ashoka Chakra, three Kirti Chakra, 13 Shaurya Chakra, including one posthumous, one Bar to Sena Medal (gallantry), 44 Sena Medals (gallantry), six Nao Sena Medals (gallantry) and two Vayu Sena Medals.

Two women officers of the Indian Navy— Lieutenant Commander Dilna K and Lieutenant Commander Roopa A—were honoured with the Shaurya Chakra award, months after they made history by completing an extraordinary expedition to circumnavigate the globe, covering 21,600 nautical miles (approx 40,000 km) over an eight-month period onboard Indian Naval Sailing Vessel (INSV) Tarini.

The Shaurya Chakra is India's third-highest peacetime gallantry award after the Ashoka Chakra and the Kirti Chakra. The Kirti Chakra has been conferred on Major Arshdeep Singh from 1 Assam Rifles, Naib Subedar Doleshwar Subba from 2 Para (Special Forces) and Group Captain Prashanth Balakrishnan Nair.

Nair was one of the four astronauts who underwent training for India's first human spaceflight mission, Gaganyaan. Of the 13 Shaurya Chakra awards, 10 were conferred on army personnel (one posthumous), two went to the navy and one to a paramilitary official.

Modi govt's Padma choice of VS leaves CPM in spot

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Narendra Modi government's choice of Communist veteran V S Achuthanandan for Padma Vibhushan has put the CPM in a bind ahead of the Kerala Assembly elections, even as the Left party noted that it was a "posthumous" recognition, and said it was "leaving it at that" because the leader's family had expressed happiness over the recognition.

Earlier, Communist veterans E M S Namboodiripad and Buddhadeb Bhattacharya declined similar awards, while the party itself made it clear that it would not seek the Bharat Ratna for Jyoti Basu, citing its line on not accepting state awards.

While it understands the political undertone of naming VS—as he was commonly known — for the Padma award, the CPM is trying to wriggle out of the issue by claiming that this episode cannot be compared with the others, as EMS, Basu, and Buddhadeb Bhattacharya were considered for the honours during their lifetime.

Lalu passes torch: Tejashwi is RJD working prez

ABHAY KUMAR
PATNA

After nearly two decades of presiding over the RJD, Lalu Prasad on Sunday passed the baton to his younger son and heir apparent Tejashwi Yadav, appointing him the party's national working president.

Tejashwi's elevation came at the RJD's national executive committee meeting in Patna, which was attended by his parents, Lalu and Rabri Devi, besides his eldest sister Misa Bharti, who is a Lok Sabha member from Pataliputra.

The move comes amid reports of Lalu not being in good health.

RJD chief Lalu Prasad, along with Rabri Devi and new party working president Tejashwi Yadav. PTI

"The dawn of a new era. Tejashwi has been appointed as the national working president of the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD)," said the RJD in a post in Hindi on X.

The elevation also marked the further cementing of Tejashwi's grip over the party, which was, however, marred by sarcastic comments from his sister, Rohini Acharya.

Always at loggerheads with Tejashwi ever since the RJD was kneecapped in the 2025 Bihar Assembly election, Singapore-based sister Rohini Acharya claimed that the party was being "influenced by 'infiltrators and conspirators' sent by ideological opponents" to weaken it "from within."

Rohini, without naming anyone, said on X: "Those responsible for leadership decisions within the party should introspect rather than avoid questions or create confusion."

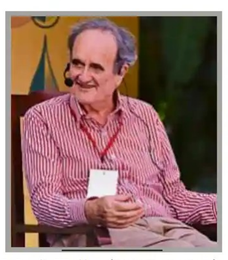
Mark Tully, the calm voice that told India's story, falls silent

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Sir Mark Tully, the acclaimed journalist, author and longtime BBC correspondent who became one of the most trusted interpreters of India to the world, died in New Delhi on Sunday at the age of 90.

He had been ailing for some time and was admitted to the Max Hospital in Saket for the past week.

Born in Calcutta (now Kolkata) on October 24, 1935, Tully spent his early years in India before being sent to England for further education. As the child of wealthy British parents in Tollygunge, he was not allowed to socialise with locals.



Mark Tully (1935-2026)

After studying theology at Trinity College, Cambridge, the young Brit was inclined to become a priest and joined the Lincoln Theological College. But destiny had other plans for him.

Tully joined the BBC in the early 1960s and was posted to New Delhi as a correspondent in 1964. He went on to serve as the BBC's Bureau Chief in the Indian capital for nearly 30 years, establishing himself as the broadcaster's authoritative "voice of India". His calm, thoughtful reporting brought nuance and depth to coverage of one of the world's most complex and dynamic regions.

The 35-year-old was sent back to London in 1969 after the government barred the BBC from operating in India after it broadcast 'Phantom India', a French documentary critical of the country.

After returning to Delhi in 1971, he was appointed Chief of Bureau the following year. His career spanned more than five decades, during which he reported on landmark events, including the Bangladesh War of 1971, the execution of former Pakistan president Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1979, the assassination of Indira Gandhi, the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in 1991, and the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992.

Tully was awarded the Padma Shri in 1992 and the Padma Bhushan in 2005.

Even after leaving the BBC in 1994, Tully continued to spend his life in India. He authored several influential books on the country, including 'No Full Stops in India', 'India in Slow Motion' and 'The Heart of India'.

In a 2001 interview with the BBC, Tully recalled England as "a very miserable place... dark and drab, without the bright skies of India".

Though he never gave up his British nationality, Tully became an Overseas Citizen of India. He described himself as "a citizen of the two countries I feel I belong to — India and Britain".

Voting reflects citizens' faith in democratic process of elections: Prez

Murmu, Modi underline duty and power of the ballot

NEW DELHI, DHNS

President Droupadi Murmu

Emphasising that voting is "not merely a political expression" but reflects citizens' faith in the democratic process of elections, President Droupadi Murmu on Sunday said that the right to vote gives concrete expression to constitutional ideals of political and social justice and equality.

Addressing the National Voters' Day celebrations, which commemorate the establishment of the EC on the same day in 1950, she said while the right to vote is important, it is equally important that all adult citizens exercise their franchise, keeping in mind their constitutional duties.

She expressed hope that all voters, "free from temptation, ignorance, misinformation, propaganda, and prejudice", will strengthen the country's electoral system through the exercise of their conscience.

Separately, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in a letter to MY-Bharat volunteers, said being a voter is not just a constitutional privilege but an important duty that gives every citizen a voice in shaping India's future.

Describing voters as the decider of the destiny of India's development journey, Modi said, "Many youngsters among your friends or relatives may be first-time voters. This is a moment of great significance for them. Our first-time voters should be welcomed into democracy as individuals who hold the power to transform the destiny of our country."

In her address, Murmu said, "Voting is not merely a political expression. It reflects citizens' faith in the democratic process of elections. It is also a means for every citizen to express their aspirations. The right to vote available to all adult citizens without any discrimination gives concrete expression to our constitutional ideals of political and social justice and equality."

She said the 'One Person, One Vote' principle ensured by the Constitution was the result of the firm faith of our Constitution-makers in the wisdom of the common people..

CEC Gyanesh Kumar said, "As per the Constitution and the law, any person who is 18 years of age or above, ordinarily resident in an Assembly constituency, and a citizen of India is eligible for registration in the electoral roll of that constituency. To fulfil this core objective, the EC initiated a SIR to ensure that no eligible voter is left out and no ineligible person is included in the electoral roll," he added.

EC working for BJP, bulldozing Opposition: Mamata

KOLKATA, DHNS: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee continued her tirade against the Election Commission (EC) even on the National Voters' Day, accusing the poll panel of acting at the behest of the BJP to bulldoze the Opposition and destroy the foundation of the country's democracy.

"On behalf of BJP, their Master, they are busy in bulldozing the opposition and destroying the foundation of Indian democracy, and yet they have the guts to celebrate Voters' Day!! [sic]" she wrote on X.

The Trinamool cited the demise of Tojammel Sheikh in Murshidabad as another example of people dying due to the anxiety over the SIR of electoral rolls in West Bengal.

The CM accused the EC of torturing the people in an unprecedented manner. "More than 130 people have died because of your tortures," she hit out at the EC.

"Election Commission of India is celebrating National Voters' Day today, and what a tragic farce that is! The Commission – working as His Master's Voice – is busy now in snatching away people's voting rights, and they have the temerity to celebrate Voters' Day! I am deeply distressed and disturbed by their conduct today [sic]," said the CM.

She alleged that instead of complying with the SC verdict and working as per the rules and norms to provide and protect people's voting rights, the EC was finding newer pretexts in the name of logical discrepancy to harass people and try to deny them and take away their electoral rights.

In the second phase of the SIR, which started on December 27, 1.67 crore voters under scrutiny are being summoned for hearings, including 1.25 crore flagged for "logical discrepancies" and 31 lakh whose current electoral roll details did not match or link to the records from the 2002 voter list.

India, EU showing new path to a fractured world: Ursula

NEW DELHI, PTI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar with European Council president Antonio Costa and European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen during a meeting in New Delhi on Sunday. PTI

India and Europe have made a "clear choice" to build a strategic partnership by leveraging their complementary strengths to show a new way of engagement to a "fractured world", European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said on Sunday ahead of summit talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

European Council President Antonio Costa and von der Leyen will be the chief guests at the Republic Day celebrations on Monday.

At the India-EU summit on Tuesday, the two sides are set to announce the conclusion of negotiations for the much-awaited free trade deal besides firming up a series of other ambitious initiatives.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, after a meeting with the two top European Union (EU) leaders, on Sunday hoped that the India-EU summit will herald a "new chapter" in the two-way ties.

"India and Europe have made a clear choice. The choice of strategic partnership, dialogue and openness. Leveraging our complementary strengths. And building mutual resilience," Von der Leyen said on social media.

"We are showing a fractured world that another way is possible," she said.

Costa described India as a "crucial partner for the EU". "Together, we share the capacity and responsibility to protect the rules-based international order," he was quoted by the EU in a brief statement.

It said the summit will offer an opportunity to build on the EU-India strategic partnership and further strengthen collaboration across key policy areas such as trade, security and defence, clean transition and people-to-people cooperation.

In a social media post, Jaishankar said it is a "great privilege" to have the two EU leaders as chief guests for the 77th Republic Day celebrations.

At the summit, India and the EU are also set to firm up a strategic defence partnership pact and a framework for mobility of Indian professionals.

While von der Leyen landed in New Delhi on Saturday, Costa arrived here on Saturday.

The EU, as a bloc, is India's largest trading partner in goods. For financial year 2024-25, India's total trade in goods with the EU was worth about $136 billion, with exports around $76 billion, and imports at $ 60 billion.

Eviction victims illegally removed from poll rolls: Oppn in Assam

SUMIR KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI, DHNS

The Congress-led Opposition alliance in poll-bound Assam on Sunday alleged that many genuine voters, including victims of evictions, are being removed from the electoral rolls under the BJP-led state government's instructions.

In a memorandum addressed to the Chief Electoral Officer, Assam, the Opposition alliance alleged that the genuine voters who are the victims of eviction are being deprived from filing/submitting Form 8 for shifting of residence.

"Such voters are neither allowed to submit online nor allowed to submit an offline application, only with a view to ousting them from the final electoral rolls. Many fake objections are also being filed against genuine voters," the Opposition alliance of the Congress, Asom Jatiya Parishad, Raijor Dal led by MLA Akhil Gogoi, and Left parties said.

Thousands of families, mainly belonging to Bengali-speaking Muslims, have been evicted from forests and government land across Assam since 2021, when the BJP came to power for the second term. The names of those evicted were removed from the electoral rolls in those areas. They were asked to transfer their votes to the constituencies where they lived before settling in government lands.

A BJP leader recently, in a press conference, said the names of 11,000 voters, who were evicted from forest land, have been removed from the electoral rolls.

The special revision of electoral rolls across Assam began in November, and the Election Commission released the draft electoral rolls on December 27. The ECI identified 4,78,992 (deceased electors) and 5,23,680 (shifted electors) for deletion.

The applicants were asked to submit claims and objections by January 22, and the final electoral rolls are to be published on February 10.

But the Opposition parties alleged that "illegal, arbitrary and unlawful bulk objections" were filed against the genuine voters, mainly on the grounds of dead voters and permanently shifted voters. "As the BJP's defeat in this election has become certain, the party is trying to remove the voters who do not vote for the BJP. Even BJP leaders are using the government offices to file fake objections to remove genuine voters," Lurinjyoti Gogoi of AJP said.

However, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma rejected the allegations and assured that the special revision exercise was underway in accordance with ECI norms.

AIADMK & DMK have 'surrendered' to BJP, I will not submit: Vijay

E T B. SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

TVK chief Vijay gestures during a cadre consultation meeting in Mamallapuram on Sunday. PTI

Bringing the AIADMK into the line of fire by dubbing it a "corrupt slave force" along with the DMK and accusing both of "cheating" the people repeatedly, actor Vijay Sunday declared he will never "buckle" under political pressure and that his Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam will face the 2026 Assembly elections "confidently" with or without allies.

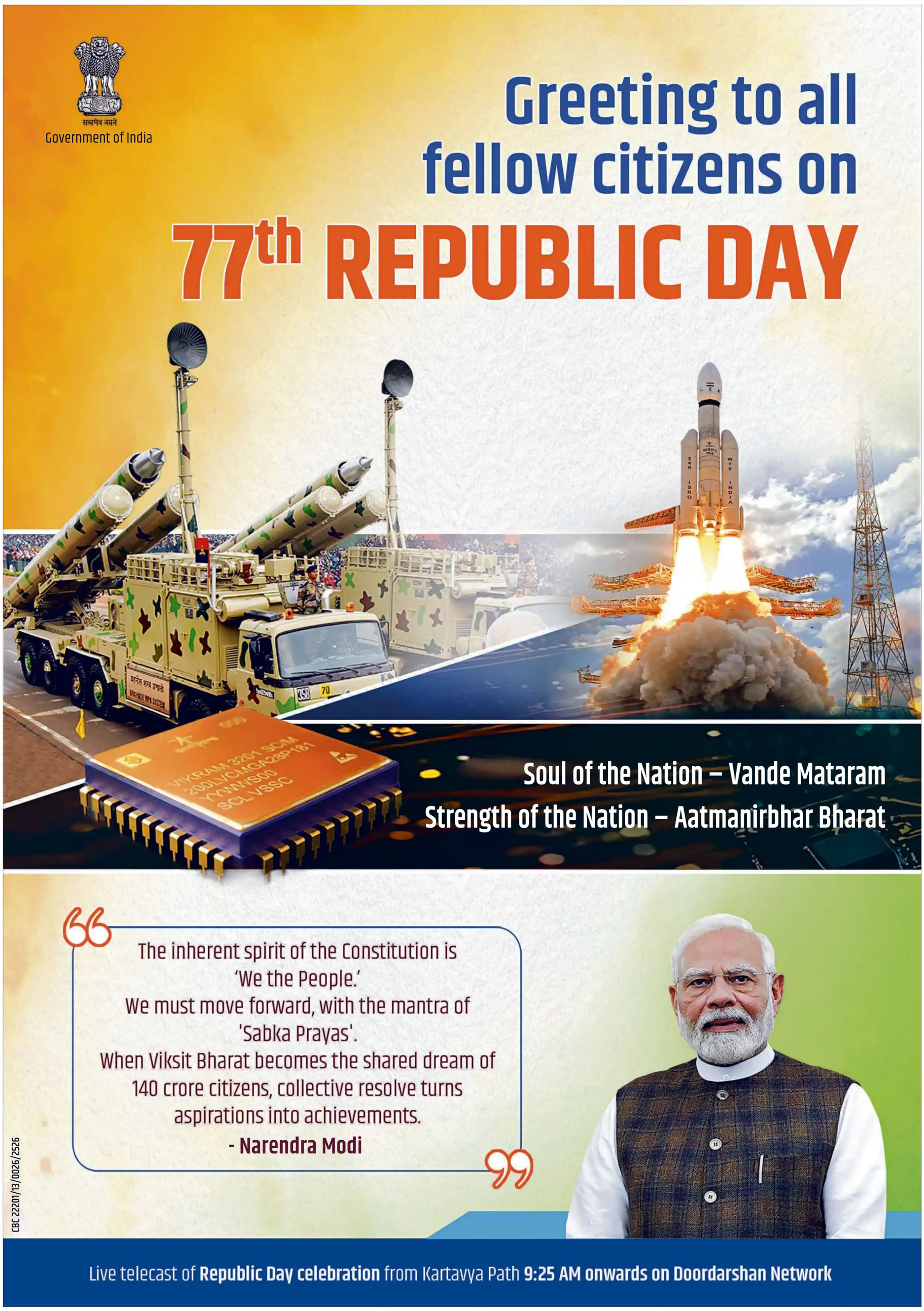
The party also released a logo for the 2026 polls that describes Vijay as the "people's Chief Ministerial candidate" with TVK's election symbol 'Whistle' occupying a prominent place. Through this, the TVK sent a strong message to the National Democratic Alliance, which has been sending feelers to the actor to join the combine to take on the DMK.

NDA leaders maintain that the practical option before Vijay was to ally with them rather than contesting alone and risking fewer or no seats, even if TVK garners an impressive vote share. However, Vijay has so far resisted engaging with the BJP, and Sunday's meeting sent a signal that TVK is not interested in joining the NDA.

In his 17-minute speech at a meeting of TVK office-bearers at a resort in Mamallapuram, Vijay, who addressed a political meeting after 38 days, assured people that he will never indulge in corruption like the DMK and AIADMK, which "cheated the people repeatedly."

"Do you think there is pressure? Do I look like a person who will crumble? It will never happen to us," Vijay said, referring to speculation that he was under pressure from the BJP regarding the release of his film *Jana Nayagan* and the CBI probe into the Karur stampede.

Yes, there is pressure, but it is on the people of Tamil Nadu. While those who ruled us earlier (AIADMK) surrendered directly to the BJP, those who are ruling us now (DMK) have surrendered indirectly to the same BJP," he said, adding that he did not enter politics to "submit" or become a "slave".


सत्यमेव जयते
Government of India
Greeting to all fellow citizens on
77th REPUBLIC DAY
Soul of the Nation – Vande Mataram
Strength of the Nation – Aatmanirbhar Bharat
The inherent spirit of the Constitution is
'We the People.'
We must move forward, with the mantra of
'Sabka Prayas'.
When Viksit Bharat becomes the shared dream of
140 crore citizens, collective resolve turns
aspirations into achievements.
- Narendra Modi
CBC 22201/13/0026/2526
Live telecast of Republic Day celebration from Kartavya Path 9:25 AM onwards on Doordarshan Network

CPM wooing Tharoor? Buzz ahead of Kerala Assembly elections

Industrialist close to Vijayan reportedly discussed possible CPM entry with him

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

Close on the heels of Congress MP Shashi Tharoor's absence from a key party meeting, fuelling speculation about his discontent with the AICC leadership, fresh reports suggest that the CPM is wooing him ahead of the Assembly polls in Kerala.

According to sections of the media, an industrialist close to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan reportedly held talks with Tharoor in Dubai regarding a possible CPM entry.

Tharoor has earlier praised Vijayan on aspects such as the state's industrial growth.

Shashi Tharoor

While Tharoor has not commented on the reports, Left Democratic Front convenor TP Ramakrishnan said that no talks had taken place. However, he added that the Left Front would welcome anyone who supports its policies.

Meanwhile, sources in political circles said that there was little chance of Tharoor aligning with the CPM, as the options available to him within the party were limited, given his profile.

Tharoor, a member of the Congress Working Committee, recently stayed away from a meeting convened by the AICC leadership to discuss strategies for the upcoming Assembly polls. His absence sparked reports that he was upset over being overlooked by Congress Rahul Gandhi during a 'Maha Panchayat' event in Kochi last week.

Congress leaders, however, maintained that Tharoor had informed them in advance that he would be unable to attend the meeting as he was scheduled to participate in the release of his two books in Kerala.

Cong, CPM woo Twenty20 leaders

Meanwhile, with unrest brewing in the Kitex group-backed 'Twenty20' following its decision to join hands with the BJP in Kerala, both the Congress and CPM are making all-out efforts to woo members of the party into their fold.

While the BJP seems to be trying to tap into minority vote banks in Ernakulam (Kochi) by bringing the Twenty20 into the NDA, the move has created cracks within Twenty20's support base.

Already, three local leaders, including former local body members, have joined the Congress, while CPM leaders have announced a campaign to attract more Twenty20 members.

Interpol notice likely against Kashmiri doc in Delhi blast case

SRINAGAR, DHNS: A paediatrician from Anantnag district of South Kashmir, Dr Muzaffar Ahmad Rather, believed to be a key conspirator in the November 10, 2025, Red Fort car blast that killed 13 people, may soon face an Interpol Red Corner notice as investigators probe his cross-border role in funding and planning the attack, officials said on Sunday.

Dr Muzaffar, originally from Qazigund, has already been declared a proclaimed offender by a special NIA court.

He is believed to have fled India in August and may currently be in Afghanistan. Sources said he acted as a link between Jaish-e-Mohammed handlers and the inter-state terror network, providing logistical support, funding, communication, and planning for the November 10 Red Fort car blast.

His brother, Dr Adeel Ahmad Rather, is already in custody and is considered another major conspirator in the network. Adeel is also wanted in connection with the Red Fort attack.

Officials said the Interpol notice is being processed to facilitate Dr Muzaffar's possible international apprehension and extradition, as investigations into the Red Fort blast and the wider inter-state network continue.

Don't think I will be removed: Judge in impeachment row

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

Breaking his silence on the impeachment notice against him by I.N.D.I.A-bloc members from the Lok Sabha, Justice G R Swaminathan of the Madras High Court said he had over four years of service left, and that he would not be removed from his job.

For the remainder of his term, he said, he hoped to excel in his profession by carrying Sanatana Dharma in his heart.

The judge also lit a Deepam (lamp) atop a Deepathoon (ceremonial lamp pillar) at an event organised by the Dhara Foundation here on Saturday.

Justice G R Swaminathan

Parallels were drawn between his action and his December 1 judgement in which he ordered that a Deepam be lit on the Deepathoon on the day of the Karthigai Deepam festival atop the Lord Murugan Temple in Thiruparankundram in Madurai.

However, the temple management refused to implement the order and lit the lamp at the Uchipillaiyar Temple, following which the judge initiated contempt proceedings against the state government.

"I believe I have four more years of service and I don't think I will be removed from my job... This event is giving me the confidence that I need," he said in a veiled reference to the impeachment notice submitted against him by over 100 MPs.

This is the first time that the judge from the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court has spoken, albeit indirectly, on the impeachment notice, which had invited criticism from the BJP and other political parties.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, at an NDA rally on January 23, indirectly referred to the impeachment petition, saying the DMK did not even spare the judiciary in its efforts to protect its vote bank on the issue.

Mumbai man arrested within 24 hours of killing co-passenger on train

MRITYUNJAY BOSE
MUMBAI, DHNS

In one of the most shocking and violent incidents involving travel in local trains in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), a professor was stabbed to death by a co-passenger during an altercation inside a crowded suburban train on Saturday evening.

The incident sent shockwaves across the section of people who commute in Mumbai's suburban trains, which is considered the MMR's lifeline.

The victim was identified as Alok Kumar Singh (33), a mathematics and statistics professor at the N M College in Vile Parle, one of the city's prominent educational institutions. He was a resident of Kurar in the Malad suburbs of Mumbai.

The accused—Omkar Shinde (27), who was engaged in metal-polishing work — was arrested on Sunday morning. A joint team of the Government Railway Police (GRP) and Railway Protection Force (RPF) managed to nab him within 24 hours of the crime.

The two reportedly had an argument while getting off the train at Malad over the informal protocols involving boarding and alighting trains. As it escalated, Shinde allegedly attacked Singh, stabbing him in the abdomen with a sharp object, which led to his death.

Singh managed to get off the train, but collapsed on the platform. Meanwhile, Shinde disappeared in the crowd.

Singh was taken to the Babasaheb Ambedkar Hospital in Kandivli, where he was pronounced dead on arrival.

CCTV footage showed the accused, in a white shirt and blue jeans, fleeing across a Foot Over Bridge shortly after the attack. Using this visual evidence and technical intelligence, the police tracked Shinde to Vasai, where he was arrested.

The police are investigating whether Shinde committed the crime in a fit of rage or if there was some other motive.

MISCELLANY

◆ COMICS ◆

Blondie

BOTH MAYA AND TOOTSIE COMPLIMENTED ME ON BEING A GREAT BOSS!
NICE, HONEY! I TOTALLY AGREE WITH THEM!
I JUST TRY TO BE SUPPORTIVE, AND GIVE RAISES, BENEFITS AND VACATIONS WHEN NEEDED!
KISS
DO YOU THINK YOU COULD TALK TO MY BOSS!?!
10-17

Hagar The Horrible

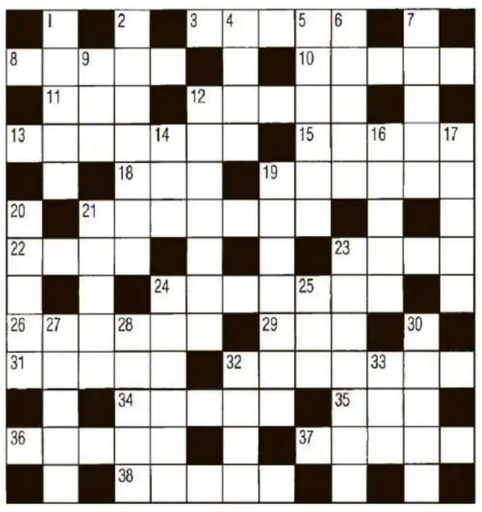
Beetle Bailey

Peanuts

I'LL BET YOU DIALED MY NUMBER BY MISTAKE, DIDN'T YOU, CHUCK? I'LL BET YOU MEANT TO CALL PEPPERMINT PATTY...
SHE JUST HAPPENS TO BE RIGHT HERE BESIDE ME...I'LL PUT HER ON...
NO! WAIT! I...
HI, CHUCK! FINALLY GOT UP NERVE TO CALL ME, EH?

Marvin

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 12339



ACROSS
3 Light purple (5)
8 Take away (5)
10 Containing milk products (5)
11 Slope down (3)
12 Punctuation mark (5)
13 Aquatic bird (7)
15 Speed contests (5)
18 Unit of weight (3)
19 Of cats (6)
21 Draw with these (7)
22 Coconut fibre (4)
23 Detest (4)
24 Light shoe (7)
26 Entertains (6)
29 Vegetable (3)
31 Skinflint (5)
32 Sure (7)
34 At no time (5)
35 Belonging to him (3)
36 Wading bird (5)
37 Fiend (5)
38 Kingdom (5)

DOWN
1 Jockey (5)
2 Planet (7)
4 Privy to (2,2)
5 Loves deeply (6)
6 Artificial waterway (5)
7 Clean feathers (5)
9 Nothing (3)
12 Calls off (7)
14 Swindle (3)
16 Panatella, say (5)
17 Cut off (5)
19 Fin (7)
20 Go away hastily (5)
21 Godly (5)
23 Ling (7)
24 Tranquil (6)
25 For every (3)
27 Colliery worker (5)
28 Spanish man (5)
30 Buffalo (5)
32 Prison room (4)
33 Point a weapon (3)

CRYPTIC

ACROSS
3 Modify a name for physical training (5)
8 What Ian needs to become a noted player (5)
10 Not one's left sock! (5)
11 A musical time for gunners at Gateshead (3)
12 A quick blow to avoid finally (5)
13 Neither flattened nor sharpened! (7)
15 Designed average central heating (5)
18 A traveller in company? (3)
19 Tickets for the donkeys at the pierhead (6)
21 Tricky side for a batsman's stroke (7)
22 The flag lady? (4)
23 I can't afford it, darling (4)
24 With his skill, he makes an impression (7)
26 Solitary hothead with unusual merit (6)
29 There's nothing in turning left (3)
31 Handle the outing (5)
32 Dispersed remains of a student group (7)
34 Let out, say (5)
35 He could be mistaken for his motherless partner (3)
36 Loves an anagram to unravel (5)
37 There could be more than two (5)
38 Being wined makes him drunk (5)

DOWN
1 Rum spilt by a learner on the wall! (5)
2 Works out that fruits contain water (7)
4 Wooden town? (4)
5 Prissy little chap, but original (6)
6 New diets bring their ups and downs (5)
7 Amid fluttering hens, I do well (5)
9 Rested on the bottom (3)
12 A good understanding of French, originally (7)
14 Is he a regular guy? (3)
16 It blooms in a monastery garden (5)
17 The Russians ruined half Strasbourg (5)
19 One who is accident free? (7)
20 Trite rhyme not taken seriously (5)
21 Quantity helping to raise fertility (5)
23 Great fun (but keep it dark?) (7)
24 No longer stony-hearted regarding dates (6)
25 He needs a bit of time (3)
27 Flynn got right to the heart of the tricky role (5)
28 Colour very unusual in a tame vulture (5)
30 The boys turning up for the beer (5)
32 Is it only half habitable? (4)
33 Neither direction is a short cut (3)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 2664

ACROSS: 1 Cubicle, 5 High-hat, 9 Pointer, 10 Egotist, 11 Olden, 12 Hands down, 13 Soporific, 15 Music, 16 Human, 18 Reykjavik, 21 Reshuffle, 24 Hotly, 25 In a daze, 26 Undergo, 27 Godsend, 28 Penance.

DOWN: 1 Copious, 2 Build-up, 3 Cut and run, 4 Earth, 5 Hue and cry, 6 Gross, 7 Heinous, 8 Titanic, 14 Far afield, 15 Mujahidin, 16 Hurling, 17 Mustard, 19 Veteran, 20 Keynote, 22 Usage, 23 Equip.

◆SU-DO-KU-6813◆

	8				4	9		
	7		9			8		
5		3						
	1			3		4		8
3				2				6
8		4		7			3	
						3		9
		8			7		2	
		6	8				5	

medium

SOLUTION TO 6812

8	2	5	3	9	4	1	7	6
9	6	7	2	1	8	5	3	4
4	1	3	5	7	6	2	9	8
7	3	1	8	2	9	6	4	5
2	9	4	7	6	5	8	1	3
5	8	6	1	4	3	9	2	7
6	4	8	9	3	2	7	5	1
1	5	2	4	8	7	3	6	9
3	7	9	6	5	1	4	8	2

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

SCRABBLE™

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C3	H4	G2	A1	O1	A1	C3	5th Letter Triple	RACK 1
Y4	B3	C3	O1	O1	A1	R1		RACK 2
L1	O1	P3	M3	E1	A1	Y4	Triple Word Score	RACK 3
W4	C3	N1	S1	E1	U1	R1	Double Word Score	RACK 4
I1	R1	M3	E1	R1	M3	P3		RACK 5

PAR SCORE 170-180
by JUDD

FIVE RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 25 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

SATURDAY'S SOLUTION

A1	D2	V4	I1	S1	E1	D2	RACK 1 =	86
Z10	A1	P3	P3	E1	R1	S1	RACK 2 =	110
A1	M3	E1	N1	D2	E1	R1	RACK 3 =	80
R1	E1	G2	A1	T1	T1	A1	RACK 4 =	74
								350

PAR SCORE 230-240 JUDD'S TOTAL

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

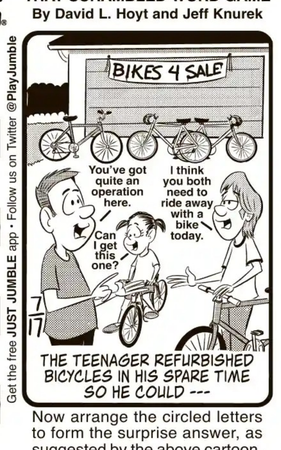
Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

XELEP

MQLUA

CECITH

EYBDDA


BIKES 4 SALE
You've got quite an operation here.
I think you both need to ride away with a bike today.
Can I get this one?
THE TEENAGER REFURBISHED BICYCLES IN HIS SPARE TIME SO HE COULD ---

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Ans. here: " " (Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: FRONT WIDTH DIGEST UNEASY
Answer: They sold lemonade all throughout the day until deciding to — STAND DOWN

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HITORI-3267

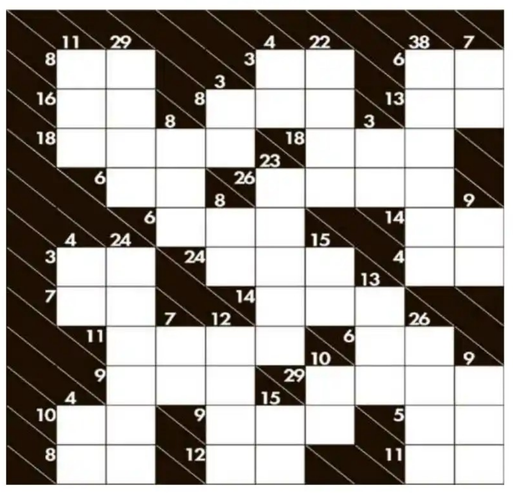
6	4	2	1	6	3	5	8
4	5	2	8	6	5	2	7
8	7	8	5	2	5	8	3
7	3	5	5	8	2	1	4
3	8	1	4	1	7	2	6
5	8	8	2	1	2	6	5
5	2	4	3	4	6	7	8
5	6	3	7	5	2	8	5

SOLUTION TO 3266

5	6	■	8	3	2	■	1
1	■	2	5	■	3	4	6
3	4	8	■	6	7	1	■
2	■	6	1	■	5	3	8
■	2	3	7	4	1	■	5
7	■	4	■	1	■	5	■
8	5	7	4	■	6	2	3
■	3	■	6	7	4	8	■

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

KAKURO- 3267



SOLUTION TO 3266

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SU DO KU X - 3808

■		8	3				2	■
6	■	2			9		■	
		9			5	■	4	
1			■		■			
				■			9	
4			■	7	■			
		■		6		2		3
	■			4			■	
■	2	1		3				■

SOLUTION TO 3807

8	1	4	2	3	5	9	7	6
5	6	7	8	1	9	2	4	3
2	9	3	6	4	7	5	1	8
1	3	9	5	6	8	7	2	4
7	8	5	3	2	4	1	6	9
4	2	6	9	7	1	3	8	5
9	5	1	7	8	6	4	3	2
6	7	2	4	5	3	8	9	1
3	4	8	1	9	2	6	5	7

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

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MRP: ₹98,500

SONY 65 4K ULTRA HD SMART LED TV
K-65S25
10% CASH BACK
REPUBLIC DAY SPECIAL OFFER 53% OFF
SPECIAL PRICE:₹65,690
MRP: ₹1,39,990

LG 55 QNED AI TV
55QNED82T6A
20% CASH BACK
REPUBLIC DAY SPECIAL OFFER 52% OFF
SPECIAL PRICE:₹55,390
MRP: ₹1,16,090

Haier 55 QLED GOOGLE TV
10% CASH BACK
REPUBLIC DAY SPECIAL OFFER 54% OFF
SPECIAL PRICE:₹55,090
MRP: ₹1,20,990

Panasonic 43 4K UHD SMART LED TV
10% CASH BACK
REPUBLIC DAY SPECIAL OFFER 39% OFF
SPECIAL PRICE:₹32,990
MRP: ₹53,990

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Board of Peace lacking in credibility

The Board of Peace, proposed by US President Donald Trump as a new international entity of nations, lacks a clear definition, structure, and purpose. He formally launched its charter last week in Davos and it looks different from his earlier announcement about it. The board was intended as part of his Phase 2 plan for peace in Gaza, covering the region's administration and reconstruction. Its scope is now wider. The charter does not mention Gaza, and it will be an "international peace-keeping body." Trump says it will work with the United Nations but he had also suggested recently that it might "replace" the UN. Trump will chair the body as a person, not as the US President, for as long as he wants, and will name his successor. His personal nominees, including his son-in-law Jared Kushner, are on the board. He will have the power to terminate the membership of any country.

India has been invited to join the board but it has not taken a decision yet. India has supported the Palestinian cause and a two-state solution for the problem, though the Narendra Modi government's position has seen some dilution in the recent past. Some important Gulf countries, including Saudi Arabia and the UAE, have joined the board. The US may try to persuade India to join it using the bargaining counters it has in its armour. But it may not be advisable for India to join the board when its mandate is not clear. Trump's idea of peace and reconstruction in Gaza is very different from the idea of peace that most other countries have. Kushner has unveiled a real estate development plan for Gaza, including building of skyscrapers there. Palestinian leaders are not members of the board. The wider mandate for the board may lead it to intervene in other parts of the world and try to solve other problems, such as the one in Kashmir. So India has to exercise caution before taking a decision.

It looks like an out-and-out personal project initiated by Trump

Only 62 countries have been invited to join the board and 19 of them have signed its chapter. Not one of them has paid the one billion dollar fee for a permanent membership. America's major allies, including members of the European Union, have stayed away till now. The UK and France have indicated that they would not join the board, and China and Russia have not made their positions clear. From the design and structure of the Board of Peace, it is clear that it will be Trump's personal body. There is a strong view that it will undermine the authority of the UN. It is not in India's interest to respond to it in a hurry.

Rail link to airport running way too late

The recent 'final approval' for the Rs 4,000 crore suburban rail link to Kempegowda International Airport is a classic case of putting the cart before the horse. Cleared only now, after the airport began operations in 2008, the project highlights Bengaluru's enduring failure to align major infrastructure with the connectivity it demands. Reaching the airport today is a nightmare. In many cases, it takes longer to get to the airport from home than it does to fly from the airport to the final destination. The suburban rail line, originating at KSR Bengaluru, is expected to offer much-needed relief by integrating other modes of transport. That such a basic, affordable mass transit link is being green-lit only now speaks volumes about the city's planning paralysis.

The irony deepens when one considers the airport's own history. The idea of a new greenfield airport was first mooted in the early 1990s. After years of delay, redesign, and policy wrangling, it was finally commissioned in May 2008—nearly two decades after conceptualisation. Yet, despite this long gestation, the airport opened without even seamless surface connectivity. The most glaring example was the trumpet Interchange, meant to link the national highway to the airport. With the opening date looming and the project not even off the ground, the airport operator was forced to step in, take over construction, and rush it through to avoid chaos on inauguration day. The elevated corridor that now forms the backbone of access came up six years later, in 2014, long after the airport had settled into full-scale operations. Meanwhile, the alternative road through Hennur still languishes, awaiting a long-overdue upgrade. The Blue Line metro to the airport, now inching forward amid repeated deadline extensions, has become a symbol of infrastructure procrastination. Ideally, such a line should have been commissioned alongside the airport itself, not two decades later. Worse, its construction along the Outer Ring Road has narrowed carriageways and aggravated traffic congestion, imposing daily costs on commuters in the name of future relief.

Final okay for suburban train connectivity comes 18 long years after the airport began operations

The lesson is obvious: major aviation infrastructure cannot be conceived in isolation from the transport networks that sustain it. Expressways and rail links must be planned and executed in parallel, not added as an afterthought. As Karnataka plans a second international airport, the experience at Devanahalli must serve as a cautionary tale. Multimodal connectivity—both road and rail—should be treated as core infrastructure, with synchronised timelines, unified planning, and clear accountability. Bengaluru cannot afford another era of post-inauguration improvisation; the city deserves a gateway that is as accessible as it is ambitious.

VISION CHECK

Karnataka's road to a trillion

With its fundamentals strong, the state may reach the economic milestone by 2033. But focused policy interventions could advance it to 2032

A V MANJUNATHA, K R SHANMUGAM AND S MADHESWARAN

Karnataka aims to become a $1 trillion economy by 2031, a goal with transformative potential for its 6.85 crore people, especially its young and dynamic workforce. With an average nominal GSDP growth rate of 15.22% from 2021-22 to 2024-25, the state is on track to achieve this milestone by 2033. However, with focused policy interventions and efficient implementation, the timeline could be advanced to 2032.

With a sustained nominal growth of 15.22%, Karnataka could reach high-income status — defined by developed country's per capita income threshold — by 2034-35, about 13 years ahead of India's national Viksit Bharat (2047-48).

As India's third largest economy, Karnataka has emerged as the second fastest-growing state, with last four-year average nominal GSDP growth of 15.22% — just 0.16 percentage points below Uttar Pradesh (15.38%), the fastest-growing state.

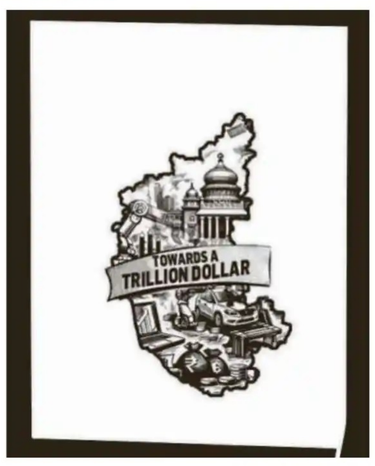
This is a notable improvement over the pre-pandemic period (2015-16 to 2018-19), when the state's average nominal growth was only 12.82%. The recent surge highlights Karnataka's resilience and potential for sustained expansion, strengthening its prospects of achieving both a trillion-dollar economy and high-income status.

During the post-pandemic phase (2021-22 to 2024-25), Karnataka recorded an average real GSDP growth of 8.73%, higher than the national average of 8.25% — the best among southern states, including Puducherry. This strong performance was driven primarily by the service sector, which grew by 10.54%. Within this sector, trade, hotel and restaurants registered the average growth of 12.16%, while real estate grew by 11.46%. The secondary sector also performed well, averaging 7.98% growth, led by an 8.95% expansion in construction.

Agriculture revitalisation: The Trillion-Dollar Vision Document proposes several initiatives for the agriculture sector — adoption of modern farming techniques, promotion of agri-startups, focus on post-harvest management, use of IOT based micro irrigation, carbon credit monetisation, and silvi-horticulture. These strategies appear to be yielding positive results, reflected in the sector's recent recovery.

In 2024-25, Karnataka's real growth rose to 7.37%, up from 5.98% in 2023-24, largely due to a rebound in the primary sector, which shifted from a contraction of -1.62% to a growth of 5.17%.

To hit the trillion-dollar target by 2031, Karnataka would need to maintain a nominal growth rate of 18.95% per annum, assuming a 2% depreciation of the rupee-equivalent to a real growth rate of 13.95%, which seems ambitious. Based on current growth dynamics, the state is more likely to reach the goal by 2033. For comparison, at their respective (four-year average) growth rates, Maharashtra (14.84%) could reach the trillion-dollar mark by 2030–31, followed by Gujarat (16.63%) by 2032–33 and Tamil Nadu (14.92%) by 2033–34. Other states are expected to reach this milestone after 2033–34.



Karnataka's growth engine continues to be the services sector, driven by high value modern services such as IT, financial services, real estate and professional services and traditional services like trade, hotels and transport.

Bengaluru anchors this dominance, serving as India's technology and innovation hub and a top global investment destination. The state's services exports have grown rapidly, crossing $150 billion in 2024-25, up from $130.3 billion in 2022–23 and $139.9 billion in 2023–24. Karnataka also ranks second after only to Maharashtra in FDI inflows, attracting $57.65 billion between October 2019 to March 2025, accounting for 20% of national FDI equity inflows.

Karnataka has a diverse industrial base encompassing electronics and hardware, pharma and biotech, aerospace, automobile components, and engineering goods. The state is now emerging as a semiconductor and electronics manufacturing hub, with dedicated parks and targeted investment promotion.

In merchandise exports, Karnataka consistently ranks among the top states, exporting significant volumes of electronics, machinery, pharmaceuticals, gems and jewellery, and processed agricultural products. Its merchandise exports doubled from $15.14 billion in 2020-21 to $30.481 billion in 2024-25, highlighting its growing global competitiveness.

According to the World Bank, the per capita income threshold for high-income countries is currently $14,006 (2024-25) and is expected to rise to $18,414 by 2047-48. For 2034-35, this benchmark is estimated at $16,100. As per National Statistical Office (NSO) of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), Karnataka's per capita income stands at Rs 3,80,906, second only to Telangana (Rs 3,87,623) and 1.86 times the national average of Rs 2,05,234. Maintaining its nominal growth rate of 15.22% would enable the state to cross the high-income threshold by 2034-35, alongside Gujarat and Tamil Nadu.

Challenges and policy imperatives

While Karnataka's fundamentals remain strong, sustaining double-digit growth requires addressing emerging constraints. The recent slowdown — from 11.06% (2021-22) and 10.52% (2022-23) to 5.98% (2023-24) and 7.37% (2024-25) — reflects a decline in construction and real estate activities, partly due to regulatory bottlenecks and financing constraints.

The agriculture sector also faced negative growth in 2022-23 and 2023-24, driven by erratic rainfall, water scarcity and lower crop incomes.

While Karnataka still ranks second in attracting the FDI, next only Maharashtra, the FDI flows declined from $10,429 million in 2022-23 to $6,619 in 2024-25, signalling the need for infrastructure upgrades, logistics efficiency and regional skill development to scale manufacturing.

The Karnataka Economic Survey (2021-22) outlined a 13-point agenda, emphasising investments in specialised hi-tech industries like biotechnology, semiconductors, electronics design, and advanced materials. Effective execution of this road-map could accelerate Karnataka's progress, potentially enabling it to achieve the trillion-dollar milestone by 2032 and emerge as a national leader in innovation-led inclusive growth.

Although Karnataka ranks second in per capita income, it records the lowest revenue receipts-to-GSDP ratio and the second-lowest revenue-expenditure-to-GSDP ratio among major states. Enhancing its fiscal capacity is crucial to meet infrastructure and business needs.

The trillion-dollar target is not merely an economic milestone; it is a symbol of Karnataka's aspirations to lead India's next growth chapter. Powered by its youth, technology ecosystem, and entrepreneurial spirit, the state stands at the threshold of a historic transformation. If it sustains its reform momentum and bridges existing gaps, Karnataka could well emerge as the first Indian state to combine high income with high inclusion — a true benchmark for Viksit Bharat.

(Manjunatha is associate professor and head, Centre for Ecological Economics and Natural Resources, Institute for Social and Economic Change; Shanmugam is former director, Madras School of Economics; Madheswaran is former director, ISEC)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

Walking to a symphony at dawn

It is also a good time to dwell on one's thoughts and say a few prayers

DEEPA MOHAN

I wake up early, and I think it is the most wonderful part of the day. Yesterday's worries seem distant, safely behind me; the air—and my mind—are fresh and ready for today. It feels wonderful to stretch one's legs and walk— not much, just about 4.5 km. It is also a good time to dwell on one's thoughts, to introspect, and to say a few prayers.

I love observing the people who are walking, jogging and running. Various services have sprung up to cater to them. Green leafy vegetables are sold to early walkers; this has now developed into a small morning market that disperses by 9.30 am. A young man sells containers of assorted vegetable juices. I don't know their merits, but many people patronise him. Banners announce yoga and meditation classes. Nearby, several people stretch and then go "ha, ha, ha!" in unison: the Laughter Club is in full swing.

I love hearing the common birds. The "trooo-trooo" call of the barbet, the shrieking of parakeets, the mewling cry of black kites—and, of course, the cawing of the ever-present crows. Now, because of the heaped garbage, there are two silent hunters as well: the shikra and the barn owl, which, in the dawn light, swoop in noiseless flight on rodents in the trash.

The smells are a great part of the walk too. Flowers for sale give off a lovely scent, as do the fallen blossoms of the Akasha Mallige (Indian cork tree). The aroma of fresh coffee wafts from the local *darshini* (eatery), along with the smell of frying *vadas*. Many walkers wind up there. I am afraid I have to add the smell of the garbage to the list as well.

People meet and greet one another —or walk past, intent on their exercise. Walking inside the park is tightly regulated, even down to the direction one must follow, so I prefer the road outside. The tall trees come alive with bird chatter. I enjoy watching the change of security guards at the IT companies.

The weather in Bengaluru is very conducive to walking, and early mornings nowadays reveal a sea of mufflers, monkey caps, sweaters and scarves. Since I perspire a lot, I usually avoid all of these.

While I have been ruminating, I find myself back at my front gate. Off I go, climbing up to my fourth-floor flat, to enjoy old movie songs on TV, read my newspaper (guess which one!) and sip my first hot thimbleful of coffee. I have learnt to have it *a la darshini*: just a small amount, piping hot.

Occasionally, it is also a good time to call my daughter and her family, halfway across the world. It is still yesterday for them. I tell them that I live in their future.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Bike taxis can ease Bengaluru's traffic woes

Apropos 'Greenlight for bike taxis: Relief for riders, auto drivers cry foul' (Jan 25), the High Court's clearance for bike taxis in Bengaluru comes as a welcome relief for commuters grappling with chronic traffic congestion. Bike taxis provide a fast, affordable, and flexible commuting alternative, helping users save nearly 20-30 minutes during peak hours while ensuring crucial last-mile connectivity. Their lower fares make daily travel economical for the public, especially office-goers and students. For riders, bike taxis offer a reliable primary source of income in the growing gig economy. Since the service utilises personal motorcycles, entry barriers remain low, making it a low-investment livelihood option that supports employment, mobility efficiency, and urban convenience in Bengaluru.
N Sadhasiva Reddy, Bengaluru

Awareness is key

I refer to 'Adolescent consent, Pocso and the Romeo-Juliet debate' (Jan 25). The authorities concerned must take immediate steps to curtail increasing Pocso cases. It is also important to conduct awareness campaigns for children and adolescents about the precautions to be adopted. They should be made aware of their rights, means to protect themselves against exploitation, and the action to be taken in the unfortunate event of an incident. Schools and parents should be suitably advised to be vigilant.
A K Shariff, Mysuru

Growth or damage?

Bellandur Lake's slow destruction reflects institutional indifference, not ignorance. When debris replaces regulation and encroachment replaces enforcement, environmental collapse becomes inevitable. Development that sacrifices nature is not growth; it is irreversible damage. Authorities must act before ecosystems die, not after citizens protest.
Anarghya R Shetty, Bengaluru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

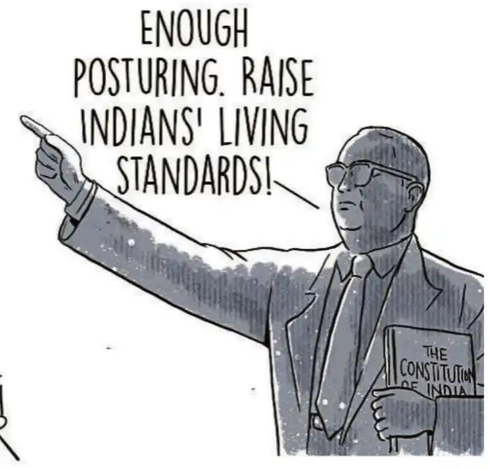
The PM understands the importance of MSME... He had promised about two crore jobs annually. Today the MSME department has given employment to 34 crore people.

Jitan Ram Manjhi, Union Minister and Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) chief

You have to start somewhere. You can always erase reality later on.

Pablo Picasso

TO BE PRECISE



IN PERSPECTIVE

Reviving the spirit of Constitution

The promise of fraternity is broken daily by structures of caste, inequality, and exclusion

JOHN KURIEN

On India's 77th Republic Day, we will hear customary tributes to the Constitution. Yet, a pressing question remains: do we treat it as a finished monument of the past, or as a living democratic project that demands our continuous participation?

The answer lies not in how we commemorate January 26, but in how we inhabit the Constitution's spirit every day. This requires revisiting a forgotten truth about its origins: it was not merely written by an elite body; it was assembled through widespread public participation—a work never meant to end.

Popular imagination views the Constitution as the product of a distinguished assembly in Delhi. However, legal historians Rohit De and Ornit Shani have reshaped this genesis story. In their provocative 'Assembling India's Constitution', they show that from 1948 to 1950, the Constitution was "assembled" through a participatory, democratic process. Citizens' groups, linguistic minorities, and communities deluged the Secretariat with letters and petitions, debating the draft nationwide. The document that emerged was thus built from below—a true "assemblage" of national aspirations. This is a little-known fact.

This history is vital because it defines the Constitution's nature. It was designed, as De and Shani argue, to be pliable and dynamic—a framework for ongoing democratic argument, not a rigid monument. The authority of "We, the People" was therefore a factual description of its creation, not mere rhetoric.

If the Constitution was assembled by the people, its Preamble is the keystone. Yet, its ideals — Justice, Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity—are too often recited as a mantra and shelved as abstractions. They must instead be our national moral compass.

This compass points to a specific practice. Fraternity, as BR Ambedkar underscored, is the most neglected and vital ideal — the soul of the document. It is the social sentiment that breathes life into laws ensuring liberty and equality. Without this shared belonging, "We, the People" shatter into "us versus them".

Here, the historical "assemblage" meets a personal duty. The promise of fraternity is broken daily by structures of caste, inequality, and exclusion. Those of us with privilege — of education, caste, or capital—have a duty of trusteeship. Constitutional morality begins with Ambedkar's rule of the self: vigilance over our prejudices and comforts, using our advantages to dismantle barriers. The Preamble thus becomes a guide for daily citizenship.

This understanding casts our present democratic moment in a troubling light. The plural assemblage that shaped the Constitution contrasts with a political culture favouring monologue over dialogue.

Today, a singular 'people's will' often marginalises dissenting voices. Parliamentary scrutiny is bypassed, consultation truncated, and mediating institutions are under strain. Law-making becomes an act of imposition.

The consequence is a dangerous divergence. We venerate the Constitution as a sacred relic while hollowing out the participatory processes that give it life. The spirit of assemblage is suffocated, replaced by suspicion.

Reviving this spirit is the work of the people. This Republic Day, we must resolve to reassemble our democratic practice. First, reclaim the Preamble as a shared civic vocabulary. Move it from bronze plaques into living rooms and public squares. Community readings, workshops, and public discussions can restore it as a moral compass against which laws and policies are evaluated. Justice and fraternity must once again become benchmarks of public discourse.

Second, deepen deliberative democracy at the grassroots. Empowered Gram Sabhas and citizen assemblies at local and state levels, inspired by models like Kerala's People's Plan Campaign, can echo the Constitution's original participatory spirit.

Third, strengthen legal empowerment. Supporting strategic litigation, constitutional literacy, and access to justice, especially for marginalised groups, remains a vital way for citizens to shape constitutional meaning.

Finally, practice fraternity as everyday politics. This personal reassembly requires listening, protecting the vulnerable, and making conscious choices that bridge social divides. This micro-politics of solidarity is where the national project is rebuilt, one relationship at a time.

This Republic Day, let us look beyond the parade. The tricolour is not just a symbol of freedom won, but a reminder of a democracy perpetually in the making. The Constitution was not a gift received on January 26, 1950. It was a project launched. Our honour for its founders lies not in ritual, but in labour—in the courageous, collective, and continuous work of reassembly.

(The writer is a reflective development practitioner based in Kozhikode)

Remembering Dewan N Madhava Rau, a quiet maker of the Republic

VEENA RAVIKUMAR

As India marks Republic Day, it is worth recalling a distinguished person from Karnataka, Dr N Madhava Rau, a member of the Drafting Committee of the Constituent Assembly from the erstwhile state of Mysore.

He has been written about or celebrated, but not nearly enough. A quiet, reserved, and erudite person who went about his work without flourish as the penultimate Dewan of Mysore, Madhava Rau remains insufficiently known in the state. He and Benegal Rao were the only two members from Mysore state on the Drafting Committee, yet even archival research in Vidhan Sabha yields little about him. He neither courted media attention nor believed in public relations.

He was a highly regarded political scientist and an accomplished lawyer. Madhava Rau was democratic in his thinking and reformist in intent. Towering figures such as Sir M Visvesvaraya and Sir Mirza Ismail recognised his abilities and supported and recommended him to Maharaja Jayachamarajendra Wadiyar for the office of Dewan of Mysore.

He rose through the ranks, serving as Director and Secretary of the Board of Directors of the Bhadravati Ironworks during its critical days. He transformed it from a white elephant into a profitable venture – one example of his administrative competence. Unfortunately, Madhava Rau assumed office in troubled times. He succeeded Sir Mirza Ismail on June 1, 1941, having earlier served on the Dewans' Council.

Born in Machilipatnam in present-day Andhra Pradesh, N Madhava Rau studied at Noble College and later at Pachaiyappa's College in Madras (now Chennai). He studied law at Madras Government College before entering the Mysore Civil Services in 1907, topping the competitive examination. At every stage, merit marked his progress.

He also did well in the 'efficiency audit brand', earning the confidence of the Mysore Administration. The years 1942-43, however, were dominated by the Quit India Movement and widespread unrest across the country, including Mysuru. With loyalties divided, the Dewan had to stay the revolt and bring back law and order. As the author par excellence D V Gundappa (DVG) observed, Dewan Madhava Rau became a victim of circumstance, despite being an honest man and an able administrator.

Some decisions taken in the interests of law and order gave the impression of proximity to the monarchy rather than alignment with the Congress. The Second World War further complicated matters. The establishment of the aircraft factory in Bengaluru, while it served the British Air Force adequately, compelled him to negotiate a fraught terrain – between State interests and imperial power, between governance and politics. Later, as HAL, the factory became a source of pride for the country.

Yet his record of public service remains substantial. He promoted cooperatives, advanced sericulture, and initiated projects for women's welfare and maternal healthcare. His ideas on education for both men and women were started and continue to flourish even today. During acute shortages of food grains, sugar, firewood and kerosene oil, ration shops were opened, and even steam-powered buses operated. These measures, though sometimes criticised, reflected administrative resolve in a period of severe constraint.

Madhava Rau's concern for Mysuru's people extended beyond the State. He participated in the Round Table Conferences with Sir Mirza Ismail in London and later served as erstwhile Mysore's Trade Commissioner there. He chaired several prize committees and remained engaged with public life and ideas.

His contributions were formally recognised. The British Government awarded him the Companion of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire (CIE), while the Maharaja conferred on him the title Pradhan Shiromani (crest jewel among the Pradhans). He also received an honorary doctorate from Mysore University.

An avid reader, he maintained a wood-panelled library in the outhouse of his home, 'Himalaya', housing biographies, classics, and books autographed by Kuvempu, DVG, and other luminaries. When he sought 'light reading', it meant H G Wells. He also wished to learn Sanskrit so he could understand the Vedas and Indian philosophy.

Tall and imposing, he carried himself with quiet dignity – sometimes in traditional court attire with a *peta*, at other times in a well-cut suit and felt hat. His portraits hang today in the Vidhan Sabha Banquet Hall in Bengaluru and in Mysuru's Jaganmohan Palace.

Asked why the Constitution needed to be so long, he replied that it had to be inclusive—capable of accommodating citizens from every walk of Indian society. Critiqued today, this was a radical vision at the time. Having travelled widely and studied their vision and documents, N Madhava Rau, along with his colleagues, helped shape a rational, inclusive, and thoughtful document, firmly rooted in its historical moment.

On a personal note, he was a keen golfer, winning a tournament at the age of 75, and served as captain of the Bangalore Golf Club. He was also a founding member of the Century Club, Bengaluru. Sociable yet reticent, more involved in sports and ideas rather than social display, he was a bundle of contradictions. It took Kodanda Rao, president of the Servants of India Society, and this writer to get people to socialise over tea.

A renaissance man, a democrat, and loyal to both people and nation, Madhava Rau was frequently sought out for counsel by people across political divides. True to his name – *Nyapathi*, meaning just-- he deserves to be remembered on Republic Day and applauded as a true citizen of Karnataka, a constitutional thinker and a public servant who believed in India's democratic promise.

(The writer, the granddaughter of Madhava Rau, is a political analyst and former faculty, Lady Shri Ram College for Women, Delhi)

The repressive Taliban government is suspicious of the Internet. But a start-up in the country is building blockchain-based tools to transform humanitarian aid

An unlikely source of crypto innovation: Afghanistan

ARYN BAKER

Hala Mahmoud Almahmoud (second from left) and members of her family with Mercy Corps workers in Halfaya, Syria. In a nation that has largely turned its back on the world, an Afghan start-up is building tools that it hopes will transform how humanitarian aid is delivered in countries shattered by conflict. THE NEW YORK TIMES

At a bustling money changer in northwestern Syria, a 46-year-old farmer gripped a plastic card like a lifeline. She had never heard of cryptocurrency, but the card held $500 of it to help restart her farm after nearly 14 years of civil war.

As a teller confirmed the total and cashed out the account, the farmer, Hala Mahmoud Almahmoud, smiled with relief and paused to give thanks. Where had such technology come from, she asked.

The answer surprised her: Afghanistan.

Blockchain-based cash transfers are not the kind of innovation that many people would expect from a country better known for its repressive Taliban leadership, which views the internet with suspicion. But in a nation that has largely turned its back on the world, an Afghan startup is building tools that it hopes will transform how humanitarian aid is delivered in countries shattered by conflict.

"We've lived through these challenges ourselves, so we know how to develop an approach that works," said Zakia Hussaini, 26, a programmer at the startup, HesabPay, which designed the technology driving Almahmoud's card.

An early proponent of the platform was the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The agency uses it to support more than 86,000 families in Afghanistan in one of the biggest public blockchain aid initiatives in the world. Mercy Corps, which donated the funds to Almahmoud, worked with HesabPay to expand its reach to include Syria, and programs for Sudan and Haiti are in development.

In Syria, getting money from abroad can be complicated. Cash is scarce, international banks steer clear of the country and remittance firms like Western Union can charge as much as 10% in transfer fees. HesabPay allows organisations like Mercy Corps to sidestep those roadblocks.

Sanzar Kakar, the Afghan American entrepreneur behind HesabPay, used to run Afghanistan's leading payroll processor. But the US withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021 and the Taliban's return set off a financial collapse. Sanctions put a halt to international transfers, and the central bank unravelled.

To address the country's increasing financial insecurity, Kakar turned to blockchain. He built HesabPay, named after the local word for "account," as a phone-based app that enabled instant transfers from one digital wallet to another, bypassing banks and the Taliban government. The Afghan government has since granted his business a license to operate officially as a financial institution, he said.

Today, the platform has more than 650,000 wallets in Afghanistan, of which about 50,000 are in regular use, moving approximately $60 million a month in stablecoins backed by the afghani, Afghanistan's currency.

Since February 2025, the United Nations has used HesabPay to deliver nearly $25 million via 80,000 digital wallets to vulnerable Afghans returning home, said Carmen Hett, the corporate treasurer of the U.N. refugee agency. "This helps reduce transaction fees, waiting periods and enhance traceability, real-time monitoring and accountability of transactions," she said.

It is not surprising that organisations like Mercy Corps and the United Nations are turning to blockchain-based money transfers to deliver aid, said Ric Shreves, an expert in decentralised finance solutions and the president of the Decentralised Cooperation Foundation. For such organisations, he said, "it's almost all upsides, compared to the way aid has traditionally been delivered."

But there are still risks, he said, especially when the payment systems are based on local-currency stablecoins, as they are in Afghanistan. (In Syria, the cryptocurrency in HesabPay wallets is backed by the US dollar, a more stable option.) Just as wallets can be shut down for interacting with sanctioned individuals, they can also theoretically be shut down by a country's central bank for political reasons.

"When we provide people with a non-physical means of doing transactions, that also means there's a possibility that those transactions could be blocked through technological means," Shreves said. Digital currencies are demonstrably safer than cash, he added, but they still cannot be stashed under a mattress.

In recent years, aid groups have increasingly turned to cash as a fast and dignified form of assistance. But cash has a flaw: It is hard to track. Donors want proof that their money reaches the right hands. Since President Donald Trump slashed U.S. foreign assistance early last year, groups like Mercy Corps have come under even more pressure to demonstrate their impact and integrity.

That is where blockchain comes in, creating a digital trail that records exactly how much was sent, to whom, and where it was spent. That mix of speed and accountability could be "a way to win back trust from those who have come to doubt the usefulness of aid," said Scott Onder, Mercy Corps' chief investment officer.

HesabPay comes with additional safeguards, like a real-time dashboard that tracks wallet activity and cross-checks it against international compliance databases. The company says the system is designed to detect illicit activity like terrorist financing, money laundering and online scams, and to raise an alert the moment suspicious transactions appear. For aid donors, it offers a level of oversight rarely possible in fragile states.

During a recent online demonstration, Nigel Pont, the company's senior adviser for humanitarian affairs, clicked on a purple dot representing a HesabPay agent in Afghanistan. Dozens of pale blue beneficiary wallets fanned out, showing recent transfers. Another click revealed where the money went next. Then one wallet pulsed red with a potential scam alert — an awkward moment in a live demo, but exactly the kind of risk the system is built to expose.

"From an aid donor perspective, that's immensely valuable," said Pont, who previously served as chief strategy officer at Mercy Corps. "A system that can automatically flag a fraud risk means you can check it out immediately instead of waiting six months for a report that somebody stole 20 grand." No system is entirely corruption-proof, he conceded, but then again, a bag of cash is not, either.

Abdul Halim Hasan, 22, who was waiting in the same line as Almahmoud for his turn at the money changer in Syria, said he imagined that one day he could use HesabPay as a regular bank account, receiving funds, making payments and saving money safely. But for the moment, it was enough that his HesabPay card allowed him to gain access to money he needed to restart his life after war.

"I certainly want to see this method spread in Syria," he said.

For now, the technology's promise remains modest and intensely practical, measured less in abstract debates about digital finance than in seeds bought, debts cleared and days made easier. In places where war has hollowed out banks and trust alike, a phone and a plastic card can stand in for institutions that no longer function. Whether blockchain-based aid will endure depends on politics, regulation and the willingness of donors to keep experimenting. But for people like Almahmoud, waiting patiently at a money changer in Syria, those questions are distant. What matters is that help arrived, intact and on time, from an unlikely place — and that, for the first time in years, the future feels just a little more manageable.

The New York Times

After the crash: The race to care

DWARAKANATH SRINIVAS AND AMRUTUR ANILKUMAR

Every Bengalurean has seen it, out of the corner of the eye, on a daily walk or commute. As we squeeze past, we glimpse a concerned crowd and an overturned two-wheeler: the scene of an accident. Somewhere there is an injured driver and/or a pedestrian in urgent need of help. We can only wonder what happened next – in the following hour, the next day, or, for that matter, for the rest of their lives.

To piece together this untold story of life after traumatic brain injury, the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) recently conducted a comprehensive study of 1,500 brain trauma cases treated in 2025. The data reveal the depth of a public health crisis while also pointing the way towards innovative solutions.

Road accidents account for the lion's share of brain injury cases treated at NIMHANS (65%). They occur almost equally on urban or rural roads, and nearly all (80%) involve two-wheelers. Eight out of 10 patients are men, and almost all come from households below the poverty line.

The alarming truth is that medical care reaches accident victims far too slowly. On average, an injured patient travels five kilometres to reach any form of care—often long enough to lose what is known as the "golden hour" after injury, the most critical period for medical intervention. Only four of ten victims reach their first point of medical care by ambulance; almost all the rest travel in private or hired vehicles.

This first stop is rarely the end of the journey. Many hospitals lack the resources for trauma response or surgery or are unwilling to admit road trauma cases. Almost all patients who eventually reach the specialised facilities at NIMHANS have made not one but two or more transfers, losing precious time along the way. Nearly 20% require surgery at NIMHANS, where any delay can have grave consequences.

The most tragic finding of the study concerns long-run outcomes. Nine out of ten patients who reach NIMHANS survive. But the study showed that, among the survivors, more than half are unable to return to work even after three months, cutting off the sole income in households that are already poor.

How can we do better? Some solutions lie squarely within our control. Helmet use remains worryingly low: only 23% of two-wheeler riders involved in accidents were wearing a helmet, and another 33% wore "half helmets" that offer little or no protection. Proper helmet use remains the single simplest way to prevent these life-altering injuries.

Bystanders, too, can save lives. The moments immediately after an accident are, by all expert accounts, the most crucial. Small actions make an enormous difference; even minutes can save lives. The "Good Samaritan" law, which protects bystanders who provide medical assistance, is an important step, but it needs far wider publicity. The question is how bystanders can be supported.

One clear need is for critical care ambulances, staffed with trained personnel, to be stationed near accident hotspots identified in the study. Bengaluru's flagship IT companies may be well placed to step up to this community welfare challenge. Digital connectivity, combined with real-time data, could allow such services to be targeted precisely and effectively.

In the hospital system, much more could be done to ensure that accident victims receive the care they need in a timely fashion. It is an extraordinary tragedy for accident victims to lose their "golden hour" and chance for healthy survival in travelling to a hospital that cannot provide the required trauma care. In the long run, we need more and better trauma networks and stronger pre-hospital emergency systems. Even with the resources we currently have, we need to educate ambulance drivers and the general public about which hospitals have adequate facilities for frontline trauma care. Most importantly, the Government needs to step in and impose a trauma care admission requirement on a network of hospitals, with the reasonable costs taken by the Government for the critical period of intervention. This will also encourage Good Samaritans to do the right thing.

For too long, we have let this crisis unfold before our eyes without serious or systematic investigation. This is a crisis of lifelong disability, broken families, and lost futures. Together, through steps small and large, we can try to do something about it. Bangalore intends to be a model city; the best way to show this is to develop a model trauma care network that makes the roads safe for its citizens and offers them a chance for survival, rather than living in constant fear of the roads.

(Dwarakanath is a professor of neurosurgery at NIMHANS, Bengaluru, and Anilkumar is a professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering at Vanderbilt University, US)

OUR PAGES OF HISTORY

50 YEARS AGO: JANUARY 1976

Bharat Ratna for Kamaraj

New Delhi, Jan 25
The President has conferred the Bharat Ratna, the country's highest award, on Mr. K. Kamaraj posthumously on the eve of the Republic Day. Seven persons get Padma Vibhushan awards. They are: Col. Bashir Hussain Zaidi, former Vice-Chancellor of the AMU, Dr. Kalu Lal Shrimali, BHU Vice- Chancellor, Giani Gurmukh Singh Musafir, poet, Dr. K. R. Ramanathan, Emeritus Professor, Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad, Mr. Keshav Shankar Pillai, cartoonist, Mr. Salim Ali, ornithologist, Bombay and film producer Satyajit Ray.

25 YEARS AGO: JANUARY 2001

Bharat Ratna for Lata, Bismillah Khan

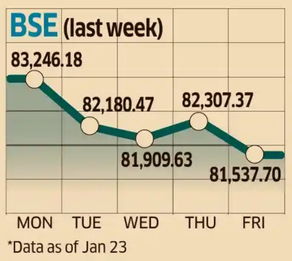
New Delhi, Jan 25 (PTI)
Nightingale of Indian music Lata Mangeshkar, who kept audiences enthralled for over five decades, and *shehnai* maestro Ustad Bismillah Khan were tonight awarded Bharat Ratna, the nation's highest civilian honour. Lata, who made her debut as a playback singer at the age of 17 and has sung over 30,000 songs earlier, is a recipient of Padma Bhushan and Dada Saheb Phalke award for her contribution to film and music. Khan has already been awarded Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibhushan.

OASIS | BRAHMA KUMAR NIKUNJ

One world, many problems, one missing link

Whole world, today, is facing many global problems which are connected with each other directly or indirectly and which, together, have created a very complex and grave situation. These problems are too many and too well-known to need any listing here. Till date many solutions have been tried to solve these problems but it has been noticed that every solution has, in the process or at the end, created some new problems even if it has partially solved the old ones. The reason why the solutions, adopted by man, have been unable to fulfil his dream is not only that the solutions have been piecemeal and of *ad hoc* and fragmentary nature but what is most important is that some essential element that should generate happiness and inner satisfaction has been missing. So, even after strenuous efforts and huge expenditure, the result achieved has not been an unmixed-happiness or a lasting respite and relief. There is, therefore, the need to know or to explore what that missing element is. An analysis of human action, in general, would suggest that our response is, invariably and always, based on our belief system. At present, our outlook, our values, our attitudes and our actions are often prompted by the belief system that is built from our knowledge of science and technology and other disciplines such as economics, politics, etc., and therefore, our response is mainly materialistic, secular, mundane or influenced by body-conscious. It is not moral and spiritual or of a quality higher than the earthly. Our motives, goals and efforts are coloured by merely worldly or material considerations and immediate concerns. They do not take into account the durable gain and a higher, nobler and ennobling experience. They violate moral and spiritual laws for immediate gain and neglect the well-being of the soul to attain a short-lived, pleasurable, sensual experience. Our present predicament thus is due to this missing element which should elicit the soul-conscious or the spiritual response.

Spiritual response is a blend of benign values such as universal love, goodwill, cooperation, and concern for the well-being of the whole of mankind based on the constant and living awareness that we are souls and children of one Supreme and are divine in our nature and origin. We must thus remember that without this kind of spiritual response, no problem, whether you call it political, economic, ethnic or by any other name, can be solved.



*Data as of Jan 23

TOP GAINERS		TOP LOSERS	
HINDUNILVR	2.22%	ETERNAL	-10.05%
TECHM	1.84%	ADANIPORTS	-8.01%
KOTAKBANK	0.94%	RELIANCE	-4.92%
HCLTECH	0.45%	ICICIBANK	-4.84%
		TITAN	-4.17%

TOP GAINERS		TOP LOSERS	
DR REDDY'S	5.11%	ADANI ENTER	-13.59%
HINDUNILVR	2.08%	WIPRO	-10.86%
TECHM	1.83%	ETERNAL	-10.08%
HINDALCO	1.67%	JIO FINANCIAL	-9.29%
KOTAKBANK	1.10%	ADANI PORTS	-7.98%

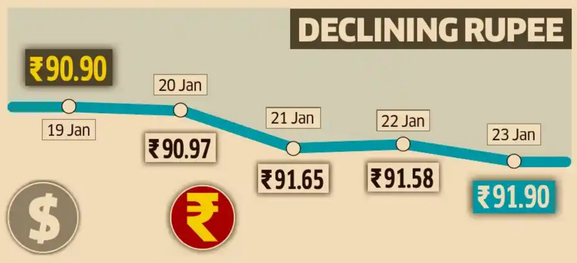
Sensex (52-week)

Jan 23, 2025	Jan 23, 2026	
76,520.38	81,437.70	6.43%

Nifty (52-week)

Jan 23, 2025	Jan 23, 2026	
23,205.35	25,048.65	7.94%

10-year Bond yield 6.66%



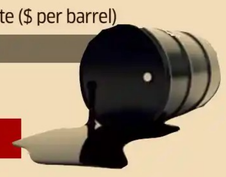
Exchange Rates*

Dollar	₹ 91.90	SGD	₹ 71.82
Pound	₹ 123.62	Yen (100 units)	₹ 57.75
Euro	₹ 107.62		

*Price at which banks sell

Crude Oil Rate ($ per barrel)

BRENT CRUDE
$65.88*
2.84%
*Rate as of Jan 23



Bengaluru fuel pump price*

(Retail)
Petrol* ₹102.92 ₹0%
Diesel* ₹90.99 ₹0%

*Rates as of Jan 24 #Rate change compared with yesterday

Commodity watch

COFFEE

Category	Rate (Rs per 50 kg)*
Arabica Parchment	₹ 25500 - 26000
Arabica Cherry	₹ 13100 - 14700
Robusta Parchment	₹ 16000 - 16500
Robusta Cherry	₹ 9700 - 10500

*Rates as on Jan 21

Other Commodities

Silkworm cocoon (Rs per kg)*

Bivoltine (BV)	₹ 716
Cross Breed (CB)	₹ 614

*Average rates as on Jan 23

India to slash tariffs on cars to 40% in trade deal with EU: Sources

NEW DELHI/BRUSSELS, REUTERS: India plans to slash tariffs on cars imported from the EU to 40% from as high as 110%, sources said, in the biggest opening yet of the country's vast market as the two sides close in on an FTA that could come as early as Tuesday.

The Prime Minister Narendra Modi government has agreed to immediately reduce the tax on a limited number of cars from the 27-nation bloc with an import price of more than 15,000 euros, sources told Reuters.

This will be further lowered to 10% over time, they added, easing access to the Indian market for European automakers such as Volkswagen, Mercedes-Benz and BMW.

India and the EU are expected to announce on Tuesday the conclusion of protracted negotiations for the free trade pact, after which the two sides will finalise the details and ratify what is being called "the mother of all deals".

The pact could expand bilateral trade and lift Indian exports of goods such as textiles and jewellery, which have been hit by 50% US tariffs since late August. India is the world's third-largest car market by sales after the US and China, but its domestic auto industry has been one of the most-protected. New Delhi currently levies tariffs of 70% and 110% on imported cars, a level often criticised by executives, including Tesla chief Elon Musk.

New Delhi has proposed slashing import duties to 40% immediately for about 200,000 combustion-engine cars a year, a source said, its most aggressive move yet to open up the sector. This quota could be subject to last-minute changes, the source added.

Battery electric vehicles will be excluded from import duty reductions for the first five years to protect investments by domestic players like Mahindra & Mahindra and Tata Motors in the nascent sector, the sources said. After five years, EVs will follow similar duty cuts.

Lower import taxes will be a boost for European automakers such as Volkswagen, Renault and Stellantis, as well as luxury players Mercedes-Benz and BMW which locally manufacture cars in India, but have struggled to grow beyond a point in part due to high tariffs.

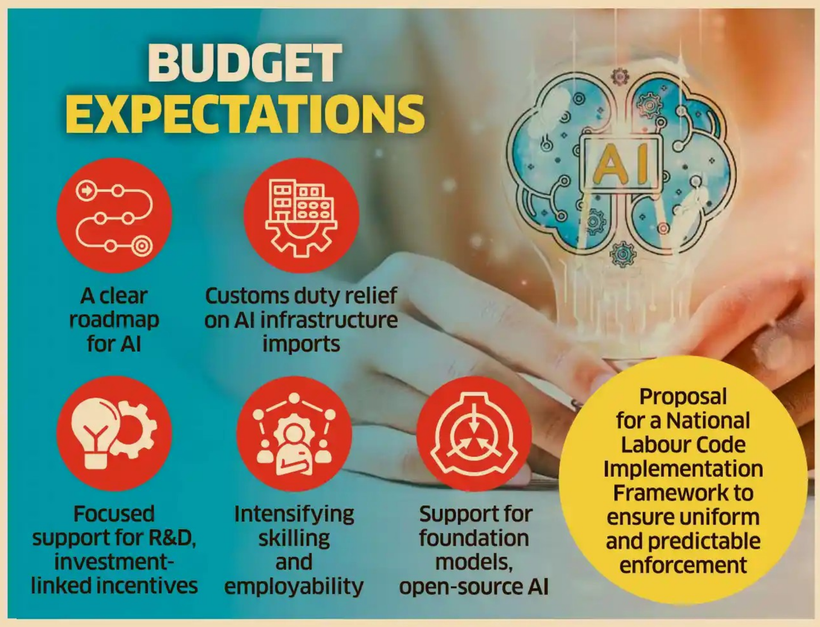
Lower taxes will allow carmakers to sell imported vehicles for a cheaper price and test the market with a broader portfolio before committing to manufacturing more cars locally, said one of the two sources.

European carmakers currently hold a less than 4% share of India's 4.4-million units a year car market, which is dominated by Japan's Suzuki Motor as well as homegrown brands Mahindra and Tata that together hold two-thirds.

'Govt should focus on funding regional AI infrastructure'

Industry demands clear data governance standards, more structural reforms

UMA KANNAN
BENGALURU, DHNS


BUDGET EXPECTATIONS
AI
A clear roadmap for AI
Customs duty relief on AI infrastructure imports
Focused support for R&D, investment-linked incentives
Intensifying skilling and employability
Support for foundation models, open-source AI
Proposal for a National Labour Code Implementation Framework to ensure uniform and predictable enforcement

From mid-to-large enterprises, companies across sectors are now focusing on AI, and there is a surge in demand for people with specialised AI skills. Experts believe that this Budget will see some policy interventions that could be in the form of tax incentives for AI-led solutions and tax credits for R&D activity. They also say that the Budget should focus on developing talent in emerging tech.

Kanishk Agrawal, CTO at Judge Group India, says the next wave of growth will not come from basic digitisation, but through investments in cutting-edge technologies such as AI, semiconductor chips, quantum computing and the infrastructure required to process large volumes of data. "Every rupee we invest to build a sovereign technology infrastructure today will become a competitive advantage for India in the future. The Budget must view innovation as the primary foundation of the future economy and not merely as an ancillary effort. We require a Budget that provides tax credits for R&D activity, establishes strong linkages between academic institutions and private sector firms and creates access to capital for product-focused startups," he adds.

In the last Budget, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced that a Centre of Excellence in AI for education will be set up with a total outlay of Rs 500 crore.

Tarun Wig, Co-Founder and CEO of Innefu Labs sees significant potential in Budget support for areas such as AI, cybersecurity, data analytics, and trusted data governance frameworks.

It is also expected to articulate the budget policies in line with national initiatives like the IndiaAI Mission and the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, thereby instilling confidence among investors. A visionary Budget that promotes indigenous innovations in deeptech will not only help attract tech giants worldwide, but also enables Indian corporations to develop solutions with a global resilience and security-focused approach, Wig says.

In 2025, five National Centres of Excellence for skilling were announced to equip youth with the skills required for 'Make for India, Make for the World' manufacturing.

Randstad India in its recommendations says India has a large network of skill centres, but the system is fragmented and often disconnected from employer demand. It recommends that government intervention could include creating a central digital B2B platform connecting training centres, staffing firms, and employers, incentivising placement outcomes, and standardising skill assessment to improve job readiness across sectors. It says that the Budget may propose a National Labour Code Implementation Framework, supported by central funding, to ensure uniform and predictable enforcement.

Though it is believed that this Budget will boost AI infrastructure, industry leaders call for clear data governance standards and more structural reforms. So far, over Rs 10,300 crore has been allocated over five years for IndiaAI Mission and 38,000 GPUs have been deployed.

Varun Babbar, VP and India MD, Qlik, says the IndiaAI Mission is a strong start, but its impact depends on reaching beyond metros. Budget 2026 should allocate resources to establish at least 20 AI CoEs in tier-2 and 3 cities, creating local innovation hubs rather than concentrating talent in Bengaluru and Hyderabad alone.

He also seeks establishing clear data governance standards. "We need regulatory frameworks that ensure data quality, security, and interoperability across sectors, especially in banking, healthcare, and public services where AI decisions directly impact lives," Babbar says, calling for investment in practical skilling at scale.

Industry leaders also expect a strong emphasis on data centre development. Deepak Kedia, CFO, Mastek Group says recognising data centres as essential national infrastructure, like roads and airports, could accelerate approvals and investments.

Time-bound tax holidays linked to capacity and green targets, smoother GST input tax credit on capital assets and customs duty relief on AI infrastructure imports could attract investments, he adds.

According to him, potential areas for additional funding should include expanding AI compute infrastructure to support AI startups and research; supporting deep-tech AI startups with streamlined funding access; investing in indigenous foundational models and tools for safe, trusted and ethical AI.

Continued support for foundation models, open-source AI, deep-tech R&D through tax incentives and grants, and targeted funding for AI deployment in priority sectors such as health, agriculture, education and smart cities will be critical, says Jaspreet Bindra, Co-Founder of AI&Beyond. "Equally important is expanding AI literacy initiatives like YUVA.ai to ensure India builds not just AI capability, but a future-ready workforce that can use it responsibly and at scale."

The Indian Staffing Federation says the manpower outsourcing industry that drives formal employment, faces a high GST rate of 18%, which discourages formalisation of employment, particularly in labour-intensive sectors like manufacturing. It calls for treating staffing as a 'merit service' at 5%, while recommending revision of Section 80JJA deductions with a dedicated slab for women hires. "Section 80JJA deductions for additional employee employment remain unchanged since 2014, unadjusted for inflation, and lack gender-specific incentives, reducing their effectiveness in promoting inclusive hiring," it says, adding that the government in the Budget should redirect a portion of the company's CSR budgets toward establishing worker hostels, canteens, and safety programmes for migrant labour.

MSMEs demand lower tax rates, ease of compliance burden

FKCCI suggests extension of PLI schemes to more industries within the manufacturing sector

MAHESH KULKARNI
BENGALURU, DHNS

Ahead of the Union Budget 2026, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) have stressed on the urgent need to ease the tax burden on small enterprises to support reinvestment, capital formation, and growth. A simplified, fair, and responsive GST framework, reduction of GST on labour charges to 5%, uniform GST interest rate of 6% on both refunds and dues, and creation of district-level GST Grievance Tribunals to ensure timely resolution of disputes, are other major demands of the MSME sector.

Raising the Section 44AB audit threshold to Rs 10 crore will enable small businesses to operate with reduced compliance pressure and lower operational costs, says SM Hussain, General Secretary, Karnataka Small Scale Industries Association (Kassia).

"These measures would significantly reduce compliance fatigue and correct many operational inefficiencies currently affecting MSMEs," he says.

Reducing the tax rate for partnership firms from 30% to 25%, in line with competitive global practices will enable small firms to retain more of their earnings for business expansion, technology adoption, and job creation, adds Hussain. "These reforms are essential to improve cash flows and encourage entrepreneurship at a time when many MSMEs are still recovering from disrupted supply-chains and strained margins," Hussain said in a pre-Budget memorandum submitted to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

MSMEs remain central to India's economic aspirations — including manufacturing expansion, employment generation, and the 'Make in India' vision — and therefore, require decisive policy support. Reviving India's MSME sector requires bold tax rationalisation, GST simplification, affordable credit, and structural reforms.

With these reforms, MSMEs can regain momentum, strengthen their competitiveness, and contribute more vigorously to India's journey toward becoming a 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047, says Hussain.

The Federation of Karnataka Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FKCCI) has said an extremely aggressive approach is now required to counteract the ongoing economic uncertainties in the world that are adversely affecting India's primary growth drivers. The expansion of the manufacturing sector has been pressured by increased input prices, supply interruptions, and labour shortages resulting from reverse migration. Businesses and entrepreneurs always anticipate reasonable, efficient, and expedient actions to boost the Indian economy and allow it to recommence at full vigour.

FKCCI has also recommended extending and expanding the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes to additional industries within the manufacturing sector, especially those covering micro and small units under the MSME category. "The present PLI beneficiaries are largely non-MSME units and extending these benefits keeping the micro and small sectors in focus will help in faster achievement of the $5-trillion economy goal," says Uma Reddy, President of FKCCI.

The chamber has also demanded inclusion of Bengaluru as a metro for the purpose of HRA taxation computation.

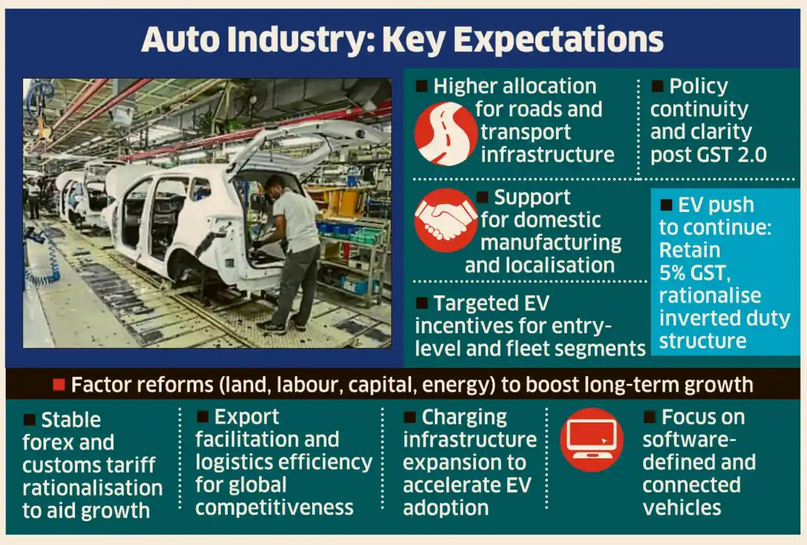
Key demands

- Timely credit sanction and disbursement to help MSMEs manage working capital cycles without disruptions
- Interest rates capped at 2% above the Repo Rate, ensuring affordable and predictable financing
- Waiver of renewal charges, processing fees, and pre-closure penalties, which often add unnecessary financial strain on small enterprises
- Uniform GST interest rate of 6% on both refunds and dues
- Annual GST assessment system to replace continuous scrutiny
- Reduction of GST on labour charges to 5%
- Reducing the tax rate for partnership firms from 30% to 25%
- Raising the Section 44AB audit threshold to Rs 10 crore
- Include Bengaluru as a metro for purpose of HRA taxation computation

NEXT GROWTH PHASE

Budget in focus as auto sector favours stability, scale & sustainability

HRITHIK KIRAN BAGADE
BENGALURU, DHNS


Auto Industry: Key Expectations
Higher allocation for roads and transport infrastructure
Policy continuity and clarity post GST 2.0
Support for domestic manufacturing and localisation
EV push to continue: Retain 5% GST, rationalise inverted duty structure
Targeted EV incentives for entry-level and fleet segments
Factor reforms (land, labour, capital, energy) to boost long-term growth
Stable forex and customs tariff rationalisation to aid growth
Export facilitation and logistics efficiency for global competitiveness
Charging infrastructure expansion to accelerate EV adoption
Focus on software-defined and connected vehicles

The automobile and automotive sector functions as both a growth engine and a multiplier industry for the economy. It contributes significantly to GDP, generates employment, and boosts trade and exports. It is also an arena with immense scope for technological advancement and innovation. The sector's outlook mirrors consumer spending trends and complements infrastructure development. Against this backdrop, expectations from the Union Budget 2026 are high, as it is expected to shape the next phase of growth for the auto industry.

Carmakers have welcomed the implementation of GST 2.0 last year and are now seeking policy continuity and long-term clarity. With electric mobility gaining traction in India, the industry is urging the government to make provisions that encourage sustainability while strengthening domestic manufacturing. "Sustained support for domestic manufacturing and increased allocation for road and transport infrastructure will be key priorities," says Piyush Arora, MD and CEO, Skoda Auto Volkswagen India. "Rationalising the inverted duty structure for EVs will strengthen competitiveness and accelerate India's transition to sustainable mobility. Continued focus on the EV ecosystem, alongside measures that support household disposable incomes, will be essential to sustain demand."

Highlighting the government's role in reviving the passenger vehicle and EV segments recently, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles MD and CEO Shailesh Chandra was quoted as saying, "There is pressure on the entry-level EV segment, and some level of incentives would help... Fleet vehicles run significantly more than personal cars, so supporting this segment has a strong multiplier impact — lower emissions and reduced oil imports. This segment was earlier identified under the FAME scheme and could be considered for PM E-Drive inclusion."

Though luxury vehicles account for only about 1% of India's automobile market, the segment remains optimistic on demand, aided by improving infrastructure. According to Audi India Brand Director Balbir Singh Dhillon, continued focus on road development, rationalisation of duties, a stable long-term policy framework, and steady foreign exchange conditions would be instrumental in accelerating growth.

Mercedes-Benz India has also called for higher capital allocation toward infrastructure. "More rationalisation of customs tariffs is needed, similar to what has been done for GST," says MD and CEO Santosh Iyer. "A robust Budget that helps stabilise the rupee will support forex stability and enable further growth."

BMW Group India President and CEO Hardeep Singh Brar stressed the need for consistency in EV taxation. "The only thing needed is that GST on EVs remains untouched. The 5% rate should continue till at least 2030; otherwise, it could derail the EV narrative. Support for electrification and charging infrastructure is critical."

The EV segment is widely seen as being at an inflection point, with manufacturers seeking targeted incentives to scale production and adoption. River Mobility CEO and Co-Founder Aravind Mani points out that while localisation is progressing, domestic cell manufacturing remains nascent. "Maintaining GST benefits on cells during this transition phase will help manage costs responsibly and sustain EV adoption momentum," he says.

From a technology perspective, Chara Technologies Co-Founder and CEO Bhaktha Keshavachar believes Budget 2026 presents an opportunity to strengthen India's EV manufacturing base. "Recognising and supporting magnet-free motor technologies within existing fiscal frameworks would de-risk India's EV ambitions and position the country as a global hub for resilient, export-ready EV powertrain solutions."

As vehicles increasingly become software-defined, policy support must evolve accordingly. "Budget 2026 needs to directly address gaps in automotive software security and digital mobility," says Sai Sridhar, MD, Elektrobit India.

Beyond product-specific measures, industry leaders are also calling for broader structural reforms. Next-generation factor reforms across land, labour, capital, and energy are seen as critical to sustaining high economic growth. "Operating as a single market requires deeper alignment between Central and state imperatives," says Kamal Bali, President and MD, Volvo Group India. He suggests a "GST-like council" to implement factor reforms more seamlessly and improve ease of doing business nationwide. Continued focus on trade agreements, logistics efficiency, and policy predictability, he adds, will be key to attracting private investment.

The auto ancillary sector is also looking to the Budget for support. Yokohama India MD and CEO Harinder Singh believes sustained infrastructure spending, enhanced export facilitation, and stable raw material trade policies are critical for India to emerge as a global manufacturing hub for premium tyres. Reflecting industry expectations, Crisil Intelligence Director Hemal Thakkar says the Union Budget should enhance domestic automotive manufacturing and safeguard the industry from sudden global policy shifts. "Higher incentives under the vehicle scrappage policy would provide a sustained boost, while continued focus on road infrastructure and last-mile connectivity remains essential," he concludes.

TOP PICKS

The data is sourced from Motilal Oswal Financial Services Limited

ICICI Bank (ID: ICICIBANK) — BUY
Upside +26%** | Last close ₹1,346 | Target: ₹1,700*

Tata Steel (ID: TATASTEEL) — BUY
Upside +17%** | Last close ₹188 | Target: ₹220*

Canara HSBC Life Ins (ID: CANHLIFE) — BUY
Upside +22%** | Last close ₹148 | Target: ₹180*

Eternal (ID: ETERNAL) — BUY
Upside +38%** | Last close ₹260 | Target: ₹360*

Radico Khaitan (ID: RADICO) — BUY
Upside +20%** | Last close ₹2,962 | Target: ₹3,550*

* Target price has been calculated on the basis of fundamentals ** Upside refers to more value stock is expected to generate than its current price

The Union Budget in an age of constraint

ANUBHAV SRIVASTAVA
MANAGING PARTNER, ARYZEN CAPITAL ADVISORS

Across households and boardrooms, there is a shared sense of unease. Geopolitical tensions, volatile global markets, and a weakening rupee that makes imports costlier have all contributed to it. This anxiety sits alongside an apparent contradiction. India's macro fundamentals remain broadly stable. Growth has held up, public investment has supported activity, and inflation has eased. Yet this stability has not translated into widespread comfort. For families, incomes have lagged expectations, consumption is patchy, and financial buffers feel thinner than the headline numbers suggest.

This budget will be presented against a difficult international backdrop. Trade is slowing, uncertainty continues to be high, and foreign capital has become more cautious. With the rupee under intermittent pressure, the margin for policy error is narrow. The finance minister's challenge is therefore not to announce bold ambitions, but to turn credibility into confidence.

The shape of this budget will be defined by "constraint." A tightening fiscal path, higher interest payments, and limited room to expand subsidies leave little space for grand gestures. External pressures reinforce this discipline. Currency volatility raises import costs, while tight worldwide financial conditions leave little tolerance for fiscal slippage. For families managing their own finances, this restraint is not an abstract macro idea. Fiscal discipline helps anchor inflation, borrowing costs, and the long-term returns on savings, investments, and pensions. In this context, stability itself becomes a meaningful policy outcome.

Public capital expenditure stays the government's main growth lever, and the logic is sound. Capex in logistics, transport, urban infrastructure, and power networks can raise productivity and encourage private investment. But the focus now must shift from size to effectiveness. These investments should reduce logistics costs, ease daily commutes, and encourage businesses to invest. For Bengaluru and other Tier-2 cities in Karnataka, efficient metro expansion, suburban rail, and logistics hubs could directly improve productivity and household comfort. Asset creation that does not lead to higher wages or more jobs risks delivering diminishing returns. As public investment matures, success must be judged by outcomes rather than allocations.

For most families, the most sensitive area is taxation and consumption. Taxpayers are not looking for handouts; they are looking for predictability. Clear tax slabs, simpler procedures, and clarity on capital gains matter as much as modest relief. A recurring concern has been the way inflation quietly raises tax burdens during difficult periods, squeezing household plans and affecting spending decisions. A durable recovery in consumption depends less on one-time concessions and more on confidence that post-tax incomes will be stable and predictable. In an uncertain macro environment, even small steps towards rationalising direct and indirect taxes can reduce anxiety and help households plan better.

Manufacturing is the quintessential weak link between growth and jobs. Incentive schemes have helped create capacity, but employment gains have lagged, especially in labour-intensive sectors like textiles and leather. Sluggish export demand and fragmented trade add to the challenge. The next phase must focus less on subsidies and more on competitiveness, exports, and skilling. For Karnataka's auto and aerospace clusters, this means aligning incentives with workforce training and export competitiveness. The real measure of success is not factories announced, but stable salaries created.

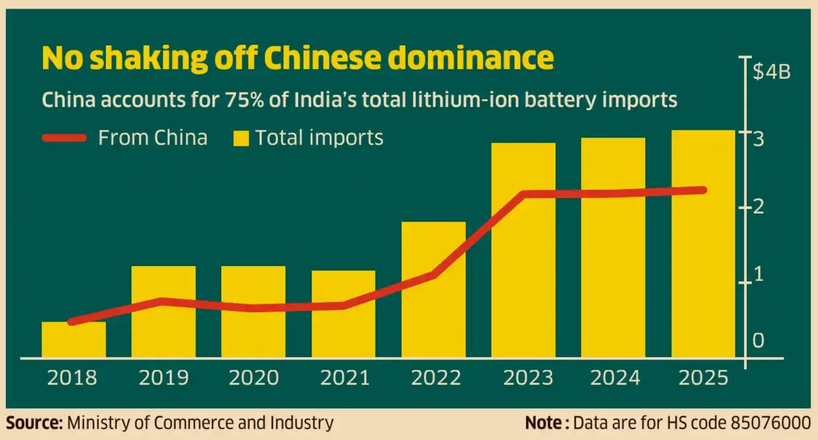
Less visible but equally important are reforms in agricultural markets, urban local body finances, and judicial capacity. Policy on climate-smart infrastructure and digital "agristack" is expected to boost private capex. These gaps may not disrupt the economy immediately, but they raise costs, discourage private investment, and weaken long-term growth—thus impacting households and companies alike. For agrarian states, including Karnataka, clarity on agristack implementation could determine whether farmers see real gains in productivity and market access.

As Kuvempu reminded us, ideas matter only when they touch lived experience. The same holds true for the upcoming budget. Its success judged not by announcements or optics, but by whether execution delivers income growth, jobs, and confidence, while preserving the stability that markets, corporates, and households alike depend on. For readers, the key watchpoints will be timelines for tax rationalisation, delivery of urban infrastructure projects, and measurable job creation in manufacturing. In an age of constraint, credibility must translate into confidence.

India is cornered by China's lock on tech

Reliance Industries has paused plans to make lithium-ion cells after failing to secure Chinese knowhow

ANDY MUKHERJEE
BLOOMBERG OPINION



Source: Ministry of Commerce and Industry **Note :** Data are for HS code 85076000

Last year, India's richest tycoon had Washington breathing down his neck. This year, Beijing is giving him a hard time.

Now that Mukesh Ambani's refinery is pivoting away from buying Russian oil, falling in line with President Donald Trump's diktat that Indian billionaires stop funding Vladimir Putin's war machine, the energy czar has a new worry: China's curbs on technology transfers.

Ambani's flagship conglomerate, Reliance Industries Ltd., has paused plans to make lithium-ion cells after failing to secure Chinese knowhow, Bloomberg News reported last week, citing people who did not want to be identified. Xiamen Hithium Energy Storage Technology Co., with which Reliance was in talks to license cell technology, withdrew from the proposed partnership, the article said. While this particular project aims to store solar power and use it to produce nonpolluting fuels like green hydrogen, similar Chinese restrictions are also expected to apply to electric-vehicle battery tech, stunting the growth of India's EV industry.

While President Xi Jinping's hawkish stance on technology exports isn't specifically directed at India, it does call for a more realistic assessment of the recent thaw in relations between the world's two most-populous nations.

Direct flights, suspended during the pandemic and kept in abeyance after 2020 border clashes, have resumed, and New Delhi is reportedly open to allowing Chinese firms to bid for government projects. Recently Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party met with a Chinese Communist Party delegation in its office, despite China's air-defence support to Islamabad during last May's India-Pakistan conflict.

But just because ice is melting, there's no reason to drink it up as Kool-Aid. The détente is nowhere near where the two neighbors can consider each other as natural partners. While Indian corporate chiefs — from Ambani to Gautam Adani and Sajjan Jindal — are looking to China as a solution to their technology deficit, Beijing views India opportunistically, as a market where its firms can offload some of their excess production.

Batteries are a prime example. While Beijing will want Indian automakers to keep sourcing Chinese-made lithium-ion cells and packs, the technology to manufacture them now requires a State Council licence before it can be transferred overseas. Getting past that hurdle will be challenging, and not just for large energy-storage projects like Ambani's. Exide Industries Ltd., which has been making traditional lead-acid batteries in India since 1947, is also betting on Chinese knowhow for lithium-ion cells. So is its rival Amara Raja Energy and Mobility Ltd., which has a licensing agreement with a unit of Hefei, Anhui-based Gotion High-Tech Co.

An outsize dependence on China underscores the limits of Modi's "Make in India" industrial policy. Nearly five years ago, New Delhi earmarked Rs18,100 crore ($2 billion) in fiscal incentives for setting up 50 gigawatt-hour of cell production capacity. So far, only 1 GWh has been installed. Meanwhile, imports of lithium-ion cells by Indian EV makers and others has grown 2.5 times to $3 billion. Of this, 75% comes from China.

Reliance says its alternative-energy plans remain on track. It's setting up a 40 GWh battery storage system assembly and cell manufacturing factory, with commissioning planned in phases during the year. "We have already received all the critical production line equipment at site with a plan to further scale up to 100 GWh annual capacity," the company said while presenting its quarterly earnings.

Although even Europe has floundered on the path to building a locally owned battery industry, it remains central to Ambani's ambitions. Still, from policymakers' perspective, the technology squeeze is very real. It adds to New Delhi's growing worries about rare earths, a vulnerability it woke up to last year when Beijing's export curbs gave it leverage against Washington and led to a truce in the US-China trade war.

Even with the accord between Trump and Xi, China is still restricting the rare-earth elements the US needs to produce its own permanent magnets. There's no reason why Beijing should make availability any easier for Indian automakers.

New Delhi's solution once again is to throw money at the problem: $800 million in subsidies for making magnets locally. But will funds alone ease the crunch? A top Indian geophysicist told the BBC that he's skeptical. Although India has significant reserves of rare earths along its coastline, it has very little mining. For more than a decade, the state-run miner has sold its output to the Japanese — a practice that is reportedly being stopped only now when local electric carmakers are already facing magnet shortages.

Even if India steps up mining and processing, it may still come up short on some critical minerals that it doesn't have in extractable quantities. The US will also struggle to shake off China's chokehold in a hurry. But without developing technologies to make high-performance magnets out of domestically available minerals, the dependence on China may be more durable for India.

In fact, Indian firms' aversion to spending money on research is eroding their sway even in their immediate neighborhood. Nepal, where three out of four cars sold are now electric, China's BYD Co. has become the market leader. The erstwhile dominance of Indian gasoline and diesel cars has evaporated, and Indian-made EVs are finding it hard to compete on quality and price.

China's lock on knowhow has hemmed India in, and Beijing has no reason to arrest the ballooning trade surplus in its favor. Just as Ambani's preeminent position within India Inc. made him Exhibit A of the rapid unraveling of New Delhi's three-decade-long courtship of Washington, his hiccups with sourcing Chinese technology are once again emblematic of a broader trend.

Mcap of 9 of top-10 most-valued firms plunges by Rs 2.51 lakh crore

NEW DELHI, PTI: The combined market valuation of nine of the top-10 most-valued firms slumped by Rs 2.51 lakh crore last week, with Reliance Industries taking the biggest hit, in line with a weak trend in equities.

Last week, the BSE benchmark Sensex tanked 2,032.65 points or 2.43%.

"Markets witnessed a sharp sell-off during the week, with bears firmly in control. Weak global cues, persistent FII outflows, a depreciating rupee, and subdued corporate earnings kept pressure elevated throughout the week," Ajit Mishra – SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said.

The combined market valuation of nine of the top-10 most valued firms, including Reliance Industries, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank and Bharti Airtel, plunged by Rs 2,51,711.6 crore.

The market valuation of Reliance Industries tumbled Rs 96,960.17 crore to Rs 18,75,533.04 crore. ICICI Bank's valuation eroded by Rs 48,644.99 crore to Rs 9,60,825.29 crore. The valuation of HDFC Bank tanked Rs 22,923.02 crore to Rs 14,09,611.89 crore, and that of Bharti Airtel diminished by Rs 17,533.97 crore to Rs 11,32,010.46 crore.

Market capitalisation (mcap) of TCS dropped by Rs 16,588.93 crore to Rs 11,43,623.19 crore and that of Larsen & Toubro tanked Rs 15,248.32 crore to Rs 5,15,161.91 crore.

Mcap of Bajaj Finance declined by Rs 14,093.93 crore to Rs 5,77,353.23 crore and that of State Bank of India edged lower by Rs 11,907.5 crore to Rs 9,50,199.77 crore. Market valuation of Infosys dived Rs 7,810.77 crore to Rs 6,94,078.82 crore.

However, mcap of Hindustan Unilever climbed Rs 12,311.86 crore to Rs 5,66,733.16 crore.

Reliance Industries remained the most valued firm, followed by HDFC Bank, TCS, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, SBI, Infosys, Bajaj Finance, Hindustan Unilever and Larsen & Toubro.

"The correction was fuelled by a confluence of factors: escalating geopolitical tensions, aggressive FII selling, and panic regarding the Rupee's weakness," Santosh Meena, Head of Research at Swastika Investmart Ltd, said on markets sell-off last week.

WEEK AHEAD

Markets to remain volatile amid global cues

Last week, markets were highly volatile amid global trade tensions and mixed Q3 earnings so far

SIDDHARTHA KHEMKA

This week, we expect Indian equities to trade largely in a range with intermittent bouts of volatility, tracking mixed global cues, while stock-specific action is likely to remain pronounced amid the ongoing Q3 earnings season. Key developments to watch include: (a) India–EU trade deal, as India and the European Union are reportedly close to finalising a landmark Free Trade Agreement (FTA), which could provide a meaningful boost to labour-intensive export segments such as textiles, jewellery, and electronics; (b) the US FOMC policy meeting scheduled for Thursday, where interest rates are widely expected to be kept unchanged; and (c) Union Budget for FY2026–27 to be presented by the Finance Ministry on Sunday, 1st February —an event of heightened significance amid global trade uncertainties and the government's continued efforts to support domestic growth.

The Budget is expected to stay focused on fiscal discipline, with the fiscal deficit likely to edge down to 4.3% of GDP, signalling a steady and credible path towards lower debt over time. The government is unlikely to announce populist measures or major tax giveaways, instead balancing growth with prudence under a nominal GDP growth assumption of ₹10%. Spending priorities should favour capital expenditure, especially in infrastructure, defence and allied industries, power, nuclear energy, electronics manufacturing, critical minerals and select labour-intensive sectors. Revenue expenditure, subsidies and non-essential spending are likely to remain tightly controlled, reinforcing the capex-led growth model.

Last week, markets were highly volatile amid global trade tensions over Greenland and mixed Q3 earnings so far. Nifty50 ended with a decline of 646 points at 25,049 (-2.5%). Nifty Midcap100 and Smallcap100 indices fell by -4.5% and -5.8% respectively amid a broad based sell-off, with all major sectoral indices ended with losses in the range of 1%-4% each. Meanwhile, Indian Rupee weakened to a fresh record low of 91.97 against the US Dollar on Friday, extending pressure from continued FII selling (Rs 36,590 crore outflows during the month till January 22), weak global cues and persistent dollar demand.

Amongst sectors, the steel industry is structurally better positioned than global peers and is expected to deliver a robust ₹8–10% volume CAGR over FY25–28E, driven by strong domestic demand, ongoing capacity expansions, and safeguard duties supporting profitability. India is likely to remain the fastest-growing steel market globally, providing a multi-year runway for volume and earnings growth. In contrast, China has shifted from a demand driver to a supply overhang, though rising global protectionism suggests its exports may have peaked, aiding price stabilisation. Domestically, steel prices are expected to recover on the back of a 12% safeguard duty, stable global prices, and benign raw material costs, supporting long-term growth visibility.

We remain constructive on the BFSI sector, with earnings expected to compound at ₹16% CAGR over FY26–28E. While the sector saw earnings downgrades in recent quarters due to margin pressure, muted loan growth, and higher credit costs, the pace of revisions has now moderated materially. Large, well-diversified banks have shown notable resilience, even as mid-sized lenders faced near-term challenges. Importantly, margins are stabilising, asset quality stress in unsecured portfolios is easing, and loan growth is gradually gaining momentum. This sets the stage for a calibrated, U-shaped recovery in earnings, with growth expected to improve meaningfully from FY27 after a relatively flat FY26.

Auto demand saw a strong revival across segments in 3Q, supported by the timely GST rate cut coinciding with the festive season. ICE two-wheelers, passenger vehicles, and commercial vehicles all posted strong growth, with demand broad-based across both economy and premium categories. The domestic 2W ICE segment has turned positive on a YTD basis, led by scooters, while motorcycles grew modestly and mopeds remained weak. Passenger vehicle volumes improved, driven largely by utility vehicles, while commercial vehicles reported double-digit growth across most sub-segments.

Overall, near-term market direction is likely to remain driven by global developments, macro data prints and earnings-related cues. The India-EU FTA, US FOMC policy meet and the Union Budget 2026 would act as key triggers for the markets over the medium term.

(The writer is Head of Research, Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Limited)

Vedanta urges policy push for low-grade iron ore beneficiation

NEW DELHI, PTI

Vedanta's iron ore mining arm, Sesa Goa, has urged the Centre to provide incentives for low-grade iron ore beneficiation, emphasising that targeted policy support and infrastructure investment are critical to make the processing economically-viable and to expand the sector.

The low-grade iron ore beneficiation process enhances the iron content of low-quality ores by removing impurities like silica, alumina, and phosphorus, thereby making them suitable for steel production.

With India's steel demand projected to reach 300 million tonnes by 2030, unlocking low-grade reserves through beneficiation could boost domestic supply security, create jobs, and add billions to government revenues via expanded mining and exports.

Currently, higher-grade ore meets domestic needs, but low-grade stockpiles offer untapped potential, provided policy hurdles like duties and regulatory delays are eased.

"India sits on massive low-grade iron ore inventory — estimated at over 300 million tonnes at mine heads — that remains underutilised due to high upfront costs for beneficiation plants and supporting infrastructure," said Sesa Goa CEO Navin Jaju.

Stressing the requirement for long-term investment to upgrade low-grade ore into higher-grade feedstock for domestic steel production, Jaju said, "There is urgent need to bring some kind of beneficial duty structure or incentive structure to beneficiate this material."

He argued against export duties on low-grade ore, adding that "Export duty by far India does not need it... We have abundance of material."

He advocated for free pricing to encourage sector growth, noting that proper evacuation infrastructure would enable exports while prioritising domestic beneficiation.

The issue is a regular agenda item in industry ecosystems and associations, with calls for tax credits, subsidised financing, and relaxed policies to accelerate projects.

India produced 289 million tonnes of iron ore in FY25, with exports hitting record highs, but beneficiation capacity lags at under 20% of the potential. He urged a time-bound framework in the Budget to incentivise beneficiation, potentially transforming low-grade waste into a strategic asset.

India's maritime sector to attract Rs 80 L cr investment: Sonowal

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, PTI: Union Shipping Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on Saturday said India's maritime sector was projected to attract investments worth over Rs 80 lakh crore in the coming years, which will help the country regain its nautical supremacy.

Sarbananda Sonowal

According to Sonowal, in 2025, the maritime sector attracted over Rs 12 lakh crore investment, and in the coming years, it will increase to Rs 80 lakh crore and generate over 1.5 crore jobs. "As a result of this investment, India's long-lost maritime supremacy will be regained and we shall be the global maritime leaders once again," he said at the inaugural ceremony of Vizhinjam port's second phase of development.

The minister further said under the leadership of PM Narendra Modi, India's maritime sector in the last decade, "has witnessed unprecedented progress" with manifold increase in the number of shipyards, maritime cruise passengers, cruise sectors, cargo movement on inland waterways and the number of operational waterways in the country.

He added that the impact of this progress has been seen on the ground as according to the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) and the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), India's logistics costs are approximately 7.97% of GDP for 2023-24, "a clear improvement from earlier levels".

"Kerala occupies a very special place in this national maritime transformation," Sonowal said. With world-class ports, modern shipping, strong ship-building and vibrant inland waterways, Kerala was "well-positioned to play a leadership role in India's maritime future", he said.

The minister also expressed confidence that Vizhinjam seaport, along with the maritime ecosystem being developed in Kerala, will generate employment, boost trade, empower coastal communities and strengthen India's position in the global supply-chain.

Sonowal said Kerala was currently implementing 56 Sagarmala-related projects with a total investment of over Rs 24,000 crore and of them 20 worth Rs 5,300 crore, have already been completed and the remaining 36 valued at Rs 18,700 crore were in various stages of implementation.

B'desh raises concern over Hasina's address in India

NEW DELHI/DHAKA, PTI: Bangladesh on Sunday expressed concern over deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina being allowed to address a public gathering in India, saying her remarks could affect the country's political stability ahead of the general elections.

In a statement issued in Dhaka, the Foreign Ministry said it was "surprised" and "shocked" that Hasina was permitted to speak at a public event in New Delhi and make political comments against the interim government, the state-run BSS news agency reported.

Sheikh Hasina

"This clearly endangers Bangladesh's democratic transition and peace and security," the statement said.

Hasina, 78, has been living in India after she fled Dhaka following the collapse of her government in August 2024, in the wake of a massive student-led agitation.

The ministry also referred to pending requests for her extradition under the bilateral extradition agreement between the two countries.

Bangladesh remains "aggrieved" that despite repeated requests, the matter of handing over Hasina has not progressed, while she has been allowed to make political statements from Indian soil, the statement said.

It said such actions were contrary to the norms of non-interference and good neighbourly relations between the two countries.

It underlined that the incitements by the Awami League leadership demonstrated why the interim government had banned the party's activities.

Trump under pressure after second Minneapolis killing

Local authorities seeking a court order to suspend the operation

WASHINGTON, AFP

Federal agents detain a protester along a commercial street during clashes following the fatal shooting of a demonstrator, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. AFP

The Trump administration faced intensifying pressure on Sunday over its mass immigration crackdown in Minneapolis, after federal agents shot dead a second US citizen and graphic cell phone footage again contradicted officials' immediate description of the incident.

Federal agents on Saturday morning shot and killed Alex Pretti, a 37-year-old ICU nurse, while scuffling with him on an icy roadway in the Midwestern city, less than three weeks after an immigration officer fired on Renee Good, also 37, killing her in her car.

The Trump administration quickly claimed that Pretti had intended to harm the federal agents -- as it did after Good's death -- pointing to a pistol it said was discovered on him.

However, video shared widely on social media and verified by US media showed Pretti never drawing a weapon, with agents firing around 10 shots at him seconds after he was sprayed in the face with chemical irritant and thrown to the ground.

After top officials described Pretti as an "assassin" who had assaulted the agents, Pretti's parents issued a statement on Saturday condemning the Trump administration's "sickening lies" about their son.

Asked Sunday what she would say to Pretti's parents, Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem said: "Just that I'm grieved for them."

Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche, speaking to NBC's "Meet the Press," also said an investigation was necessary to get a full understanding of the killing.

Asked if agents had already removed the pistol from Pretti when they fired on him, Blanche said: "I do not know. And nobody else knows, either. That's why we're doing an investigation."

Their comments came after multiple senators from US President Donald Trump's Republican Party called for a thorough probe into the killing, and for cooperation with local authorities. "There must be a full joint federal and state investigation," Senator Bill Cassidy of Louisiana said.

The Trump administration controversially excluded local investigators from a probe into Good's killing.

Minnesota's Democratic Governor Tim Walz said on Saturday that the "federal government cannot be trusted to lead this investigation. The state will handle it, period."

Local authorities have sued the federal government seeking a court order to suspend the operation, with a first hearing set for Monday.

Obama condemns killing

Former US president Barack Obama and his wife Michelle on Sunday condemned the killing of Pretti, saying in a joint statement it should be a "wake-up call" that core US values "are increasingly under assault."

Indian-origin man shot dead in Canada

OTTAWA, PTI: A 28-year-old Indian-origin man was shot dead in Canada in what police believe was a "targeted" attack linked to gang activity.

The incident occurred on January 22 in Burnaby city of British Columbia province, the Integrated Homicide Investigation Team (IHIT) said in a statement on Friday.

Around 5:30 pm local time, Burnaby police "responded to reports of gunfire near the 3700 block of Canada Way. On arrival, police found a male victim with critical injuries. Despite life-saving efforts, he was pronounced dead at the scene," it said.

The victim has been identified as 28-year-old Dilraj Singh Gill of Vancouver.

Police said Gill was known to them, and the shooting "appears to have a nexus to the British Columbia Gang conflict". The IHIT said it was a "targeted shooting".

Shortly after the shooting, police located a vehicle engulfed in flames in Buxton Street.

Investigators have confirmed that the burned vehicle is connected to the homicide.

US security deal for Ukraine '100% ready': Zelenskyy

Says Kyiv is waiting for its partners to set a signing date

VILNIUS (LITHUANIA), AP

Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Sunday that a US security guarantees document for Ukraine is "100% ready" after two days of talks involving representatives from Ukraine, the US and Russia.

Speaking to journalists in Vilnius during a visit to Lithuania, Zelenskyy said Ukraine is waiting for its partners to set a signing date, after which the document would go to the US Congress and Ukrainian parliament for ratification.

Zelenskyy also emphasised Ukraine's push for European Union membership by 2027, calling it an "economic security guarantee".

The Ukrainian leader described the talks in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, as likely the first trilateral format in "quite a long while" that included not only diplomats but military representatives from all three sides. The talks, which began on Friday and continued Saturday, were the latest aiming to end Russia's nearly four-year full-scale invasion.

Zelenskyy acknowledged fundamental differences between Ukrainian and Russian positions, reaffirming territorial issues as a major sticking point.

"Our position regarding our territory—Ukraine's territorial integrity—must be respected," he said.

Russian President Vladimir Putin discussed a Ukraine settlement with US President Donald Trump's envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner during marathon talks late Thursday. The Kremlin insisted that to reach a peace deal, Kyiv must withdraw its troops from the areas in the east that Russia illegally annexed but has not fully captured.

Zelenskyy said the US is trying to find a compromise, but that "all sides must be ready for compromise".

Negotiators will return to the UAE on Feb 1 for the next round of talks, according to a US official. The recent talks covered a broad range of military and economic matters and included the possibility of a ceasefire before a deal, the official said.

Iran unveils mural warning of retaliation if US conducts strike

DUBAI, AP

A new mural unveiled in a central Tehran square on Sunday contains a direct warning by Iran to the United States to not attempt a military strike on the country.

The painted image of several damaged planes on the flight deck of an aircraft carrier bears the slogan: "If you sow the wind, you will reap the whirlwind."

The unveiling of the mural in Enghelab Square comes as the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier and accompanying warships move towards the region. US President Donald Trump has said the ships are being moved "just in case" he decides to take action.

"We have a massive fleet heading in that direction and maybe we won't have to use it," Trump said Thursday.

Enghelab Square is used for gatherings called by the state, and authorities change its mural based on national occasions. On Saturday, the commander of Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard warned that his force is "more ready than ever, finger on the trigger."

Tension between the US and Iran has spiked in the wake of a brutal crackdown on nationwide protests that saw thousands of people killed and tens of thousands arrested. Trump had threatened military action if Iran continued to kill peaceful protesters or carried out mass executions of those detained.

There have been no further protests for days, and Trump claimed recently that Tehran had halted the executions of about 800 arrested protesters—a claim Iran's top prosecutor called "completely false."

But Trump has indicated he is keeping his options open, saying on Thursday that any military action would make last June's US strikes on Iranian nuclear sites "look like peanuts.".

Europe chose US reliance over Russia ties: Kremlin

MOSCOW, PTI

Having rid themselves of their ephemeral dependence on Russia, they have now definitely fallen into dependence on the US. Because dependence on Russia was ephemeral, it was a mutual dependence: we depended on them as sellers, and they depended on us as buyers. At the same time, we were working in conditions of fierce global competition

European nations have freed themselves from what they called reliance on Russia only to fall into a new "dependence" on the US, the Kremlin has said, blaming Western sanctions for distorting bilateral economic ties.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Europe's earlier relationship with Russia was one of "mutual dependence" in which Moscow acted as a seller and European countries as buyers in a competitive global market.

"Having rid themselves of their ephemeral dependence on Russia, they have now definitely fallen into dependence on the US. Because dependence on Russia was ephemeral, it was a mutual dependence: we depended on them as sellers, and they depended on us as buyers. At the same time, we were working in conditions of fierce global competition," Peskov said in a recent interview with Russian State TV. He criticised the current European political leadership, saying the situation reflected a "degeneration of politicians in power" and harmed the entire system of international relations.

Citing EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas, Peskov said there was little scope for dialogue.

"Neither we nor the Americans will discuss anything with her. The only thing left is to wait until she leaves," he said.

Peskov also questioned NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte's role in matters related to Denmark and Greenland.

"If you ask what connection the NATO Secretary General has to Denmark or Greenland, you're unlikely to find an answer. None. And how Mr Rutte could decide the fate of the Danish nation is also unclear. A lot of strange things are going on," he said.

Referring to Greenland's strategic importance, Peskov said it was crucial for global security and stability and that Russia would closely monitor Washington's plans to develop the 'Golden Dome' missile defence system.

"What kind of 'dome' will it be? What threats will it be designed to counter? I have no doubt that our military will closely monitor and analyse these plans," he said.

Nepali Cong emerges as largest party in upper house

KATHMANDU, PTI: Nepali Congress party has bagged nine seats followed by CPN-UML with eight and Lokatantrik Samajwadi Party with one seat in Sunday's election to the National Assembly.

The Nepali Congress and the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist–Leninist) – CPN-UML – had reached a pre-poll understanding ahead of the voting for the vacant seats in the upper house.

According to the Election Commission (EC), as many as 95.68 per cent votes were polled for the election held from 9 am to 3 pm (local time) and the process had concluded peacefully.EC spokesperson Narayan Prasad Bhattarai said that out of the 18 vacant positions in the National Assembly, election was conducted for 17 seats only as one candidate was elected uncontested.

Major winter storm pounds US from south to northeast; flights cancelled

WASHINGTON, AFP

People cross a street as trucks plow snow in the Manhattan borough of New York City on Sunday. AFP

A major winter storm brought hazardous conditions to a wide swath of the United States on Sunday, from Texas to New England, prompting warnings to stay off roads, along with mass flight cancellations and power outages.

As the storm dumped snow, sleet and freezing rain across the wide expanse, officials warned that an arctic air mass behind the system would see temperatures fall dangerously low for days, prolonging disruptions to daily life.

"The snow/sleet impacts will linger well into next week with rounds of re-freezing that keeps surfaces icy and dangerous to both drive and walk on for the foreseeable future," the National Weather Service (NWS) said.

The PowerOutage.com tracking site showed over 700,000 customers without electricity as of Sunday morning, mostly in the southern US where the storm began on Saturday.

Nearly 250,000 residential and commercial customers were without power in Tennessee, while Texas, Mississippi and Louisiana -- where such storms are uncommon -- each had over 100,000 outages.

Authorities from Texas to North Carolina and New York urged residents to stay home due to the perilous conditions.

"Stay off the roads unless absolutely necessary," Texas's Emergency Management Division posted on X.

The storm was moving Sunday from the south to the northeast, dumping snow on heavily populated cities across the US east coast.

Top general threatened Chinese Communist Party's leadership : PLA Daily

BEIJING, PTI

PLA Daily, the mouthpiece of the Chinese military, has accused top military official Zhang Youxia and senior General Liu Zhenli of threatening the Communist Party's absolute leadership over the armed forces as one of the reasons why they were placed under investigation.

They have severely fuelled political and corruption problems that threaten the Communist Party's absolute leadership over the armed forces and undermine the party's governance foundation, an editorial in People's Daily said on Sunday.

The two senior Chinese military officials were placed under investigation for serious violations of the ruling Communist Party's discipline and laws, the Defence Ministry here said on Saturday.

The charge of threatening the party's absolute leadership is regarded as "very serious" as the Chinese military functioned under the command of the Communist Party of China (CPC), which exercises absolute control of the armed forces.

Ever since he took over the leadership in 2012, President Xi Jinping, 72, who also heads the party, the military besides the presidency has been emphasising that it is imperative for the military to function under the party leadership. The party holds the gun, he has been persistently reminding the military generals.

Observers say the emphasis of party loyalty also means endorsing his absolute leadership as he has been declared as the core leader of the party and action against Zhang 75, came as Xi may regard the top general undermining his leadership.

Unlike the other generals, Zhang is the first-ranking Vice Chairman of the powerful Central Military Commission (CMC), the overall high command of the Chinese military headed by Xi.

Zhang's position on the CMC makes him the highest-ranking uniformed officer in the Chinese military.

In the end, his fate is no different to the two defence ministers and eight other generals who were sacked since 2023 under his watch as he too was detained by the military corruption investigators on Monday, according to reports.

He was accused of corruption and of failing to rein in his close associates, family members and relatives and blamed for not flagging problems to the party leadership at the first instance, the charges against him said.

WORLD AT A GLANCE

A building occupant uses his phone to record US rock climber Alex Honnold climbing the Taipei 101 building without ropes or safety gear in Taipei on Sunday. He reached the top of the spire of the 508-metre (1,667-foot) tower in 90 minutes . AFP

Indian captain of 'Russian' shadow tanker in French custody

▸ France on Sunday took into custody the Indian captain of an oil tanker suspected of belonging to Russia's sanctions-busting "shadow fleet" for the vessel failing to fly a flag, prosecutors said, reports AFP from Martigues.

The 58-year-old captain was in charge of the tanker, the Grinch, which was seized by the French navy in the Mediterranean on Thursday and is now moored, under guard, at a southern French port near Marseille.

The Marseille prosecutors' office, in charge of investigating the case, said the rest of the ship's crewmembers -- all also Indians -- were being "kept on board".

The Grinch is thought to be part of a fleet of mostly old tankers used to transport Russian oil in violation of a crude price cap imposed by Western countries and the G7 over Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

Vessels in that "shadow fleet" frequently change the flags they fly, in a practice known as "flag-hopping" and sometimes sail under invalid flags, in an attempt to escape detection and tracking.

The Grinch was escorted by the French navy on Saturday to the Gulf of Fos, in southern France.

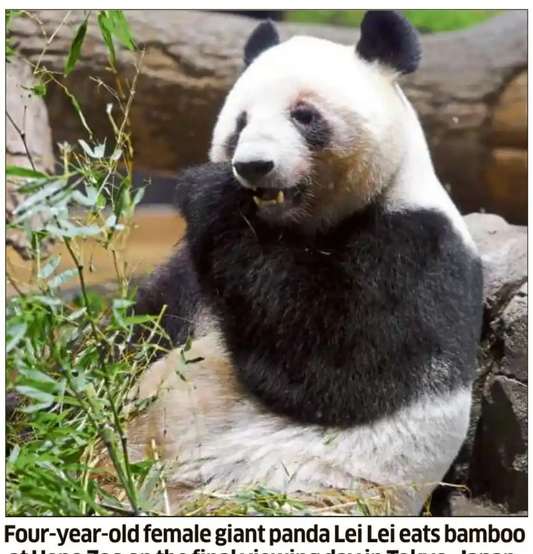
Iraq to prosecute IS militants

▸ Baghdad will prosecute and try militants from the Islamic State group who are being transferred from prisons and detention camps in neighbouring Syria to Iraq under a US-brokered deal, Iraq said on Sunday, report AP from Baghdad.

The announcement from Iraq's highest judicial body came after a meeting of top security and political officials who discussed the ongoing transfer of some 9,000 IS detainees who have been held in Syria since the militant group's collapse there in 2019.

The need to move them came after Syria's nascent government forces last month routed Syrian Kurdish-led fighters—once top US allies in the fight against IS—from areas of northeastern Syria they had controlled for years and where they had been guarding camps holding IS prisoners.

Syrian troops seized the sprawling al-Hol camp—housing thousands, mostly families of IS militants—from the Kurdish-led force, which withdrew as part of a ceasefire.



Four-year-old female giant panda Lei Lei eats bamboo at Ueno Zoo on the final viewing day in Tokyo, Japan, on Sunday. The last two pandas in Japan are set to return to China on Tuesday following a souring of ties between Asia's two largest economies. REUTERS

New FBI-style UK police force

▸ A new National Police Service made up of "world class talent" will be created to take over counter-terrorism, fraud and other serious gang violence investigations in the UK, Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood said on Sunday, reports PTI from London.

The National Police Service (NPS), modelled on the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in the US, will be equipped with state-of-the-art technology to track down and catch dangerous criminals. The new nationwide force will bring the work of existing agencies, such as the National Crime Agency (NCA) and regional organised crime units, under one umbrella. "The current policing model was built for a different century; some local forces lack the skills or resources they need to fight complex modern crime such as fraud, online child abuse or organised criminal gangs," said Mahmood, who will table the proposals in Parliament on Monday.

Rescuers search for landslide victims in Pasirlangu village in Bandung, West Java, on Sunday, after the disaster killed 16 people and left about 80 missing. AFP

Grace Harris

RCB seek quick rebound as MI fight for revival

VADODARA, PTI: Table-toppers Royal Challengers Bengaluru will look to bounce back from their first setback of the season when they take on struggling Mumbai Indians in a Women's Premier League match here on Monday.

RCB's unbeaten run came to an end on Saturday as they suffered their first loss of the campaign in the match against Delhi Capitals, a timely reminder that momentum can shift quickly in the business end of the league.

Despite the defeat, Bengaluru remain well-placed at the top of the standings, having shown consistency across departments through the tournament, and will be keen to quickly put the loss behind them as the playoffs draw closer.

Mumbai Indians, on the other hand, find themselves in urgent need of revival. The defending champions have lost three matches in a row, a slide that has stalled their campaign and put their playoff aspirations under pressure.

A win against the league leaders could not only arrest the slump but also provide a much-needed confidence boost for a side searching for rhythm.

MI's concern has largely been inconsistency, particularly in closing out key moments, while RCB will be eager to iron out the issues exposed in their previous outing.

With both teams carrying contrasting motivations the match promises to be a keenly-contested affair.

CRICKET THIRD T20I

India send out a warning

Abhishek, Surya strike 50s as hosts hammer NZ to seal series

GUWAHATI, PTI

Abhishek Sharma produced a breathtaking 12-ball fifty while skipper Suryakumar Yadav continued his sublime touch with another attacking half-century as India waltzed through the chase in just 10 overs to seal an eight-wicket win over New Zealand in the third T20I, sealing the five-match series 3-0 here on Sunday.

Chasing a modest 154, India turned the contest into a one-sided exhibition of power-hitting with Abhishek remaining unbeaten on a blistering 68 off 20 balls (7x4, 5x6) and Suryakumar smashing an equally fluent 57 not out off 26 deliveries (6x4, 3x6).

The duo stitched together an unbroken 102-run stand for the third wicket in just 40 balls to finish the game with 60 deliveries to spare.

Earlier, wrist spinner Ravi Bishnoi marked his return with a superb spell alongside the seasoned duo of Jasprit Bumrah and Hardik Pandya as India strangled New Zealand with disciplined bowling to restrict them to an under-par 153/9.

Abhishek's assault was particularly stunning as the left-hander raced to a 12-ball fifty -- the second fastest by an Indian in T20Is, just two balls slower than his mentor Yuvraj Singh -- as he dismantled the New Zealand attack with fearless intent.

India, however, had an early hiccup as Sanju Samson's struggles at the top continued as he was dismissed for a golden duck. Matt Henry's first delivery brushing the thigh pad before crashing into the off-stump.

Samson's scores in the series now read 10, 6 and 0, putting further pressure on his spot with Ishan Kishan making a strong case with his explosive batting.

If that setback worried the hosts, Abhishek and Ishan quickly erased them.

Ishan, fresh from his match-winning 76 in Raipur, launched Henry for two sixes and a four in a single over, showcasing his imperious pull and lofted drives.

Abhishek, who had fallen for a duck in the previous game, soon joined the carnage, dancing down the track to hammer Jacob Duffy and collecting 16 runs in an over.

India's powerplay score swelled to 94/2 -- their second-best ever, just one short of the 95 they had posted against England -- effectively putting the result beyond doubt.

Ishan fell for a brisk 28 off 13 balls. But there was no respite for New Zealand. Suryakumar slipped seamlessly into top gear, piercing gaps at will and improvising with his trademark scoops and flicks as Abhishek continued to clear the ropes with ease.

The pair toyed with the field and bowlers alike, wrapping up the chase in ruthless fashion to underline India's dominance and secure an unassailable series lead.

Playing for India after nearly a year, Bishnoi, who came in for rested Varun Chakravarthy, grabbed the opportunity with both hands, returning impressive figures of 2 for 18 while maintaining relentless control through the middle overs. India struck early inside the powerplay to put the visitors on the back foot reducing them to 36/3.

Hardik (2/23) set the tone in the opening over with a stunning backward-running catch to dismiss Devon Conway (1). He then struck in his next over as Rachin Ravindra (4) mistimed a short delivery and Bishnoi at deep square leg completed the formalities.

India's Jasprit Bumrah (second from left) celebrates with teammates after taking the wicket of New Zealand's Tim Seifert during their third T20I match in Guwahati on Sunday. PTI

Highlights from third T20I

FASTEST 50s BY INDIAN BATTERS IN T20IS

Balls	By	Vs	Venue	Year
12	Yuvraj Singh	Eng	Durban	2007
14	Abhishek Sharma	NZ	Guwahati	2026
16	Hardik Pandya	SA	Ahmedabad	2025
17	Abhishek Sharma	Eng	Mumbai	2025

MOST BALLS REMAINING IN INDIA'S RUN-CHASES

Target	Balls left	Vs	Venue	Year
58	93	UAE	Dubai	2025
86	81	Sco	Dubai	2021
97	64	Ban	Hangzhou	2023
154	60	NZ	Guwahati	2026
82	59	UAE	Mirpur	2016

INDIA'S BEST RUN-RATES IN T20IS

Run Rate	Vs.	Venue	Year
15.50	NZ	Guwahati	2026
14.85	Ban	Hyderabad	2024
14.15	SA	Johannesburg	2024
13.69	Sco	Dubai	2021

Compiled by Arun Gopalakrishnan

SCOREBOARD

NEW ZEALAND

Conway c Pandya b Rana 1
Seifert b Bumrah 12
Ravindra c Bishnoi b Pandya 4
Phillips c Kishan b Bishnoi 48
Chapman c Samson b Bishnoi 32
Mitchell c Kishan b Pandya 14
Santner c Abhishek b Bumrah 27
Jamieson b Bumrah 3
Henry (run out) 1
Sodhi (not out) 2
Duffy (not out) 4
Extras: (LB-4, W-1) 5
TOTAL (for 9 wkts, 20 overs) 153
Fall of wickets: 1-2, 2-13, 3-34, 4-86, 5-112, 6-112, 7-132, 8-134, 9-144.
Bowling: Rana 4-0-35-1, Pandya 3-0-23-2, Bishnoi 4-0-18-2, Bumrah 4-0-17-3, Kuldeep 3-0-32-0, Dube 2-0-24-0.

INDIA

Samson b Henry 0
Abhishek (not out) 68
Kishan c Chapman b Sodhi 28
Suryakumar (not out) 57
Extras: (W-2) 2
TOTAL (for 2 wkts, 10 overs) 155
Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-53.
Bowling: Henry 2-0-28-1, Duffy 2-0-38-0, Jamieson 1-0-17-0, Sodhi 2-0-28-1, Santner 2-0-28-0, Phillips 1-0-16-0.
Result: India won by 8 wkts. **PoM:** Jasprit Bumrah. **Series:** India lead 5-match T20I series 3-0. **4th match:** Visakhapatnam (Jan 28).

Participation subject to govt advice: Naqvi

Pak have named 15-member squad for the T20 WC

LAHORE, PTI

Mohsin Naqvi

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Mohsin Naqvi on Sunday dismissed the impression that the announcement of the World Cup squad meant that the country has decided to take part in next month's ICC mega event.

Naqvi reiterated his earlier stand that the PCB has been waiting to know the Pakistan government's stand to take a call on the nation's participation in the T20 World Cup, scheduled across India and Sri Lanka.

The International Cricket Council had pushed Bangladesh out of the upcoming T20 World Cup on Saturday, bringing in Scotland after BCB refused to let its team travel to India citing security concerns in the wake of Mustafizur Rahman's ouster from the IPL.

"We are waiting for the government's advice and whatever the government tells us to do we will do it. If they don't want us to go for the World Cup, we will follow it," Naqvi informed Pakistan players and head coach Mike Hesson here in a meeting which was held after the squad announcement.

Pakistan named Salman Ali Agha-led 15-member squad for the T20 World Cup.

Pakistan squad: Salman Ali Agha (captain), Abrar Ahmed, Babar Azam, Faheem Ashraf, Fakhar Zaman, Khawaja Mohammad Nafay (wk), Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Salman Mirza, Naseem Shah, Sahibzada Farhan (wk), Saim Ayub, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Shadab Khan, Usman Khan (wk) and Usman Tariq.

Ex BCCI president Bindra no more

NEW DELHI, PTI: Former BCCI president Inderjit Singh Bindra **(in pic)**, who played a major role in ushering in a new era of cricket marketing, passed away here on Sunday. He was 84.

He is survived by a son and daughter.

Bindra served as the board president from 1993 to 1996, and was also the president of the Punjab Cricket Association from 1978 to 2014.

In 2015, the PCA stadium was renamed as IS Bindra Stadium as a tribute to his inspiring work as an administrator.

As Shah mentioned, Bindra was indeed a stalwart of Indian cricket administration, having started the association with the game as an official in 1975.

Bangla says Shakib can return

DHAKA, AFP: Bangladesh cricket chiefs have reopened the door for the return of ex-captain Shakib Al Hasan, who was also a lawmaker in the former ruling party overthrown in a 2024 uprising.

Shakib's links to ousted leader Sheikh Hasina made him a target of public anger, and he was among dozens facing murder investigations for a deadly police crackdown on protesters.

Karnataka stumble to first defeat

Agarwal & Co in a spot after slipping to third spot following a big loss to MP

VIGNESH BHARADWAJ
BENGALURU, DHNS

There are few challenges in red-ball cricket that can rival final day's test of survival. And for an injury-hit Karnataka to survive 83 overs, it required their batters to show plenty of fight and a bit of luck to deny Madhya Pradesh a win after playing catch up for most parts of their penultimate Ranji Trophy Elite Group B game in Alur (1) here.

While they did bring those qualities to the table in phases for 67.5 overs, it was not for the hosts to prevent their first loss of the seacon -- a 217-run drubbing has pushed down Karnataka to third spot on the table with 21 points as Maharashtra (24) and Madhya Pradesh (22) occupied the top two spots ahead of group's final round of matches.

Karnataka now must win their final game against Punjab to advance to the knockouts.

"I am very positive and hopeful about doing well against Punjab. We will bounce back stronger in the coming games," Karnataka coach Yere Goud said after the game.

With MP declaring at 229/8 in 75.1 overs early on day 4, Karnataka needed 362 for an improbable win. However, they suffered another collapse on a surface with no demons as the spinners, Sagar Solanki (3/20) and Saransh Jain (3/37), spun a web around them.

Their struggles were compounded by Karun Nair's inability to bat, having been ruled out on the fourth morning. BCCI's "serious injury replacement substitute" came into effect as the injury was external and they turned towards Nikin Jose (26, 101b, 2x4).

The defeat looked inevitable for the home team when two of their other India Test internationals collectively made seven runs. While looking to be positive, Mayank Agarwal (7, 21b) nicked a good length delivery off Aryan Pandey (2/9) to slip.

Aryan, who did not look as sharp on the third morning, picked up his second in three balls after Devdutt Padikkal (0, 2b) completely misread the line and had his stumps go for a stroll.

"It was a poor performance, which let us down. The wicket was good to bat on. We needed to adapt, we could not," Goud added.

Only Aneesh KV (57, 142b, 7x4) inspired a fightback, defending resolutely for 226 minutes and batting with confidence after scoring 92 in the first innings.

With Nikin, he raised a 61-run stand for the fourth wicket. The partnership broke when Nikin was undone by Saransh, trapping him in front. Shreyas Gopal (1), too, didn't last long and was knocked over by Sagar in the next over.

After reaching his second fifty of the game, Aneesh's vigil ended when he was caught behind in the 56th over. Vidyadhar Patil (26 not out) entertained with some good hits but only managed to delay the inevitable as he ran out of partners.

Earlier, MP added 25 runs in 4.1 overs to their overnight total. Continuing his fine run, Vidyadhar finished with figures of 4/54.

Himanshu Mantri (96, 214b, 4x4) looked to shift gears eyeing a seventh first-class hundred but fell four runs short after Shreyas (2/58) castled him with a quicker one.

Madhya Pradesh's Saransh Jain (third from right) celebrates after dismissing Karnataka's Vidwath Kaverappa during their Elite Group B Ranji Trophy match at the KSCA cricket ground in Alur on Sunday. DH PHOTO/ KRISHNAKUMAR P S

SCOREBOARD

MADHYA PRADESH (I Innings): 323 all out
KARNATAKA (I Innings): 191 all out
MADHYA PRADESH (II Innings (O/n: 204/6): Yash Dubey lbw Shikhar 17 (54b, 2x4), Himanshu Mantri b Shreyas 96 (214b, 4x4), Shubham Sharma b Vidyadhar 32 (49b, 3x4), Rajat Patidar b Vidyadhar 0 (2b), Venkatesh Iyer b Shreyas 1 (3b), Akshat Raghuwanshi b Shikhar 13 (28b, 1x4), Saransh Jain retd hurt 15 (31b, 1x4, 1x6), Sagar Solanki lbw Vidyadhar 13 (32b, 2x4), Aryan Pandey c Agarwal b Vidyadhar 18 (28b, 2x4), Kumar Kartikeya (not out) 11 (10b, 2x4). Extras (W-8, B-5) 13. **TOTAL (for 8 wkts, 75.1 overs) 229 decl.**
Fall of wickets: 1-38 (Yash), 2-96 (Shubham), 3-96 (Patidar), 4-99 (Venkatesh), 5-123 (Akshat), 6-179 (Sagar), 7-212 (Aryan), 8-229 (Himanshu).
Bowling: Vidwath Kaverappa 14-4-32-0, Vidyadhar Patil 18-5-54-4, Vyshak Vijaykumar 11-1-39-0, Shikhar Shetty 11-0-41-2, Shreyas Gopal 21.1-3-58-2.
KARNATAKA (II Innings): Aneesh KV c Mantri b Kuldeep 57 (142b, 7x4), Mayank Agarwal c Akshat b Aryan 7 (21b, 1x4), Devdutt Padikkal b Aryan 0 (2b), Nikin Jose lbw Saransh 26 (101b, 2x4), Shreyas Gopal b Sagar 1 (3b), Abhinav Manohar lbw Sagar 6 (37b, 1x4), Shrijith KL c&b Sagar 0 (1b), Vidyadhar Patil (not out) 26 (69b, 5x4), Vyshak Vijaykumar c&b Kartikeya 8 (21b, 1x4), Shikhar Shetty b Saransh 1 (11b), Vidwath Kaverappa b Saransh 0 (1b). Extras: (W-1, NB-2, B-5, LB-4) 12, **TOTAL (all out, 67.5 overs) 144.**
Fall of wickets: 1-15 (Agarwal), 2-15 (Padikkal), 3-76 (Nikin), 4-77 (Shreyas), 5-91 (Abhinav), 6-91 (Shrijith), 7-114 (Aneesh), 8-133 (Vyshak), 9-144 (Shikhar).
Bowling: Aryan Pandey 7-4-9-2, Saransh Jain 19.5-4-37-3, Kumar Kartikeya 18-6-42-1, Kuldeep Sen 9-1-27-1, Sagar Solanki 14-5-20-3.
PoM: Saransh Jain. Karnataka's next match: Punjab (Jan 29).
Other Group B scores: In Pune: Goa: 209 all out & (O/n: 210/6) 248 all out in 97 overs (Abhinav Tejrana 109, Darshan Misal 65; Jalaj Saxena 5-81, HA Walunj 3-45) vs Maharashtra: 350 all out & 109/2 in 21.2 overs (Arshin Kulkarni 52 n.o.). Maharashtra: 6 pts; Goa: 0.

10k runners turn up for maiden MAHETHON

BENGALURU, DHNS

(From left) Raghavendra Prabhu, Additional Registrar, MAHE Bengaluru, SR Vishwanath, MLA Yelahanka, Madhu Veeraraghavan, Pro Vice-Chancellor of MAHE Bengaluru Campus and MLHS, MAHE Manipal, Sharath Rao, Pro Vice-Chancellor - Health Sciences, MAHE, Anand Venugopal, Chief Operating Officer, MAHE at the first edition of MAHETHON in Bengaluru on Sunday.

The inaugural edition of MAHETHON 2026, organised by MAHE Bengaluru Campus of Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), saw over 10,000 runners participating here on Sunday.

Held under the theme "Run Green, Breathe Free" with the tagline "Bengaluru Runs for Earth," a prize pool worth Rs 13.75 lakh was awarded to winners in the half marathon (21 kms), 10k, 5k and fun run (3k) categories.

The marathon featured an AIMS-certified route, with the race commencing and concluding at the MAHE Bengaluru Campus, Yelahanka, had runners from different age groups with varied fitness levels across multiple categories taking part.

The event was officially flagged off by SR Vishwanath, MLA Yelahanka, who on the occassion said: "I sincerely appreciate the Manipal Group of Institutions for bringing quality healthcare and education institutions closer to the people. It is heartening to see participants travel all the way from Bengaluru and other places, which reflects the trust and confidence people have in Manipal institutions."

Also present were Madhu Veeraraghavan, Pro Vice-Chancellor of MAHE Bengaluru campus and MLHS, MAHE Manipal; Sharath Rao, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Health Sciences; Anand Venugopal, Chief Operating Officer and Raghavendra Prabhu P, Additional Registrar.

Barca reclaim top spot

BARCELONA, AFP: Barcelona reclaimed top spot in La Liga with a 3-0 win over Real Oviedo on Sunday, thanks to goals from Dani Olmo, Raphinha and an acrobatic Lamine Yamal effort.

After Real Madrid beat Villarreal on Saturday to take pole position overnight, the Catalans edged a point ahead again.

Atletico down Mallorca

Atletico Madrid eased to a 3-0 win over Mallorca on Sunday.

Results (on Sunday): Barcelona: 3 (Olmo 52nd, Raphinha 57th, Yamal 73rd) bt Real Oviedo: 0; Atletico Madrid: 3 (Sorloth 22nd, Lopez 75th-og, Almada 87th) bt Mallorca: 0. **On Saturday:** Villarreal: 0 lt to Real Madrid: 2 (Mbappe 47th, 90+4th P); Rayo Vallecano: 1 (Ciss 59th) lt to Osasuna: 3 (Budimir 29th, Victor Munoz 90+1st, Osambela 90+4th); Valencia: 3 (Duro 16th, Comert 59th, Ramazani 90+4th P) bt Espanyol: 2 (Terrats 54th, Copete 79th OG); Sevilla: 2 (Peque 42nd, Adams 56th P) bt Athletic Bilbao: 1 (Navarro 40th).

Royals edge Toofans to set up summit clash with Lancers

BHUBANESWAR, PTI: Ranchi Royals registered a sensational 3-2 win over Hyderabad Toofans in Qualifier 2 to enter the men's Hockey India League final here on Sunday.

Royals will face Vedanta Kalinga Lancers in the title clash on Monday.

It was a hat-trick of goals by Tom Boon (13', 15', 34') that ensured Royals book their place in the final, and the Toofans replied through Jacob Anderson (5') and Amandeep Lakra (38').

It was top-class action between the two teams with Toofans getting off the blocks with a sensational goal by Anderson in the 5th minute.

It was a goal brilliantly setup by India's rising midfielder Rajinder Singh who tackled almost three defenders, swiftly making his way from the right flank to find Anderson poised in front of the goal to get the perfect deflection.

The 1-0 lead by Toofans put them in good stead but they ended up squandering it when they gave away two easy PCs to Ranchi Royals.

With Boon in their ranks, Royals were sure to capitalise on it. Boon struck two back-to-back goals with good injection from the experienced Manpreet Singh in the 13th and 15th minute to end an entertaining opening quarter.

The second quarter remained goalless despite some fantastic attempts on goal by both teams.

Royals returned from the half-time break with a clear intent to take further lead. It was Boon again at the centre of the action when his team won another PC in the 34th min.

Ollie Watkins

Villa stay in title hunt, Chelsea climb into top four

LONDON, AFP

Aston Villa closed to within four points of the Premier League summit with an impressive 2-0 win at Newcastle, while Chelsea climbed into the top four on Sunday.

Leaders Arsenal can stretch their advantage over Villa and Manchester City back to seven points when they host Manchester United later.

But Villa bounced back from a shock 1-0 defeat at home to Everton last weekend to remain on the fringes of the title race.

Emi Buendia put Unai Emery's men on course for their first win at St. James' Park since 2005 with a brilliant strike from outside the box on 19 minutes.

Injury-time defeat

Bournemouth ended Liverpool's 13-game unbeaten run as Amine Adli's 95th minute strike secured a thrilling 3-2 win for the Cherries on Saturday night.

Goals from Evanilson and Alex Jimenez put the home side in a commanding position but Liverpool hit back through Virgil van Dijk and Dominik Szoboszlai to level.

However, Bournemouth won for just the second time in 15 matches after Adli fired in with virtually the last kick of the game.

Results: Newcastle: 0 lt to Aston Villa: 2 (Buendia 19th, Watkins 88th); Brentford: 0 lt to Nottingham Forest: 2 (Jesus 12th, Awoniyi 79th); Crystal Palace: 1 (Richards 88th) lt to Chelsea: 3 (Estevao 34th, Pedro 50th, Fernandez 64th).

Rahul Williams

Williams wears junior billiards crown

BENGALURU, DHNS: Tamil Nadu's Rahul Williams put the disappointments of losing two finals behind him with a gritty show en route to his maiden junior boys' billiards title at the National Championships in Bahadurgarh, Haryana late on Saturday evening.

Williams emerged triumphant on the basis of a superior points average following a three-way tie in the semifinal league. The 14-year-old Coimbatore lad, who defeated Rohan Pai of Maharashtra and Bhavya Pipaliya of Gujarat, went down to Karnataka's Mayank Karthik. Williams, Pai and Karthik finished with two wins and a loss apiece in the four-player league.

Williams had earlier suffered twin defeats to Aarav Sancheti in the junior snooker and sub-junior billiards finals from a winning position. The TN cueist not only avenged those two losses with a comfortable win over Sancheti in the quarterfinals of the junior billiards, but also denied his rival's quadruple hopes.

Results: Junior boys: Billiards: Semifinal league: Rahul Williams (TN) bt Rohan Pai (Mah) 411-227; bt Bhavya Pipaliya (Guj) 480-167; lost to Mayank Karthik (Kar) 224-236.
Final standings: Rahul Williams, 1; Rohan Pai, 2; Mayank Karthik, 3.
Sub-junior girls: Snooker: Final: Padmakshe C (TN) bt Afeefa Thabassam (TN) 3-2 (33-67, 57-21, 49-12, 38-68, 78-76).
Billiards: Final: Afeefa Thabassam (TN) bt Padmakshe C (TN) 80-63.

TENNIS AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Medvedev fails Learner test

Djokovic walks into quarters; Alcaraz, Sabalenka dominate

MELBOURNE, AFP

Learner Tien said he was playing some of his best tennis ever after battling through a nosebleed to crush three-time finalist Daniil Medvedev and make a Grand Slam quarterfinal for the first time on Sunday.

The 20-year-old American, who capped a breakout 2025 by winning the ATP Next Gen title, thrashed the Russian 6-4, 6-0, 6-3 in just 1hr 42 mins at the Australian Open.

Carlos Alcaraz powered into the quarterfinals on Sunday and Novak Djokovic joined him without hitting a ball, as the next generation roared.

Aryna Sabalenka surged through but Coco Gauff was forced to fight at Melbourne Park, where temperatures eased to 22C after the brutal heat of a day earlier.

Top seed Alcaraz was in ominous touch at Rod Laver Arena, dismissing the American Tommy Paul 7-6 (8/6), 6-4, 7-5 in a masterclass.

The 22-year-old plays home hope and sixth seed Alex de Minaur, who defeated 10th seed Alexander Bublik in straight sets.

Djokovic, chasing a record 25th Grand Slam crown, was scheduled to face Jakub Mensik in the last 16 on Monday but the Czech player pulled out injured.

Djokovic will face American ninth seed Taylor Fritz or fifth seed Lorenzo Musetti of Italy for a place in the semi-finals.

Alcaraz, who like Djokovic is yet to drop a set at this year's tournament, has never gone beyond the quarter-finals in Melbourne.

The Spaniard has in the past struggled with precision and a lack of consistency in his serving technique. He is now sporting a new-look serve that has become a handy weapon -- and been compared to Djokovic's serve.

Alexander Zverev, well beaten by Jannik Sinner in last year's final, plays Learner Tien of the United States next.

Germany's third seed demolished Argentina's 18th seed Francisco Cerundolo in straight sets.

The 25th seed Tien ran out a surprisingly easy three-set winner over three-time finalist Medvedev. Tien, 20, eased into his first Grand Slam quarter-final despite a nosebleed in the first set that required lengthy treatment.

He later said his nose was just dry. World number one Sabalenka will face impressive 18-year-old American Iva Jovic in a tasty last-eight encounter.

Belarusian top seed Sabalenka, a two-time Melbourne champion, opened the day on Rod Laver Arena and saw off the brave challenge of 19-year-old Canadian Victoria Mboko.

Sabalenka won 6-1, 7-6 (7/1) while Jovic destroyed unseeded Yulia Putintseva 6-0, 6-1 in just 53 dominant minutes.

Indian Jrs bow out

India's singles challenge at the junior Australian Open ended in a matter of hours with Maaya Rajeshwaran Ravathi and Arnav Paparkar losing their respective opening round matches on Sunday.

Maaya, competing in the girls' singles, struggled to find her rhythm against Anna Pushkareva and went down 4-6, 1-6 in a match that lasted just over an hour.

In the boys' singles, Paparkar too made an early exit, losing 3-6, 4-6 to American Vihan Reddy.

Results: Singles: 4th round: Men: 1-Carlos Alcaraz (ESP) bt 19-Tommy Paul (USA) 7-6 (6), 6-4, 7-5; 6-Alex de Minaur (Aus) bt 10-Alexander Bublik (Kaz) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; 3-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt 18-Francisco Cerundolo (Arg) 6-2, 6-4, 6-4; 25-Learner Tien (USA) bt 11-Daniil Medvedev (Rus) 6-4, 6-0, 6-3.
Women: 1-Aryna Sabalenka (BLR) bt 17-Victoria Mboko (Can) 6-1, 7-6 (1); 29-Iva Jovic (USA) bt Yulia Putintseva (Kaz) 6-0, 6-1; 3-Coco Gauff (USA) bt 19-Karolina Muchova (Cze) 6-1, 3-6, 6-3; 12-Elina Svitolina (Ukr) bt 8-Mirra Andreeva (Rus) 6-2, 6-4.

USA's Learner Tien returns during his victory over Russia's Daniil Medvedev during their men's singles round of 16 match of the Australian Open in Melbourne on Sunday. AFP

Sabalenka keen on mixed doubles date with Djokovic

MELBOURNE, AFP: World No.1 Aryna Sabalenka (**in pic**) said on Sunday she is keen to play mixed doubles with Novak Djokovic, but is still waiting for the Serbian great to tell her she is "his dream partner".

The pair played together once before, a charity match on Rod Laver Arena ahead of the 2024 Australian Open.

Asked if they would team up again, she replied: "Maybe at the US Open this year.

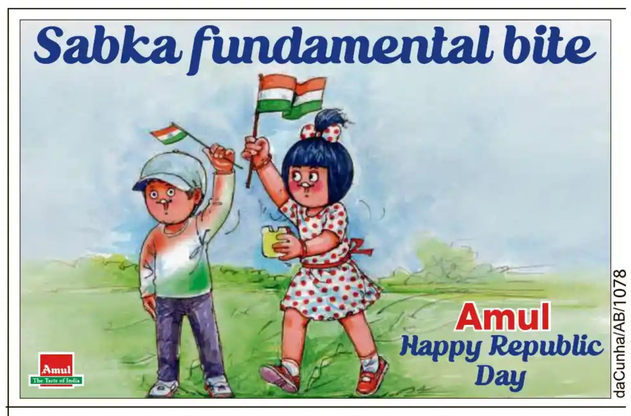
"I mean, I'm still waiting," she added jokingly.

"I'm still waiting for that long message from him, how he would like to play with me, that I'm his dream partner. So I'm still waiting for the message. Never got it. I don't know. Maybe we're not playing."

Sabalenka's friendship with 24-time Grand Slam champion Djokovic came to the fore last year after she practised with him and they spent time together socially along with their partners.

She has previously credited him with helping her on and off the court, seeking his counsel after losing two finals last year.

On Sunday, Belarusian top seed braved challenge of Canadian Victoria Mboko won 6-1, 7-6 (7/1).



Mohsin 8-for puts Karnataka on top

BENGALURU, DHNS

Mohsin Khan.
DH PHOTO/KRISHNAKUNMAR PS

Having picked up 12 wickets in the Ranji Trophy this season, off-spinner Mohsin Khan continued to deliver the goods with a stunning eight-for to put Karnataka seven wickets away from victory on the third day of their Col CK Nayudu Elite Group fixture against Chandigarh in Alur (3) here.

The hosts, who enforced the follow-on after taking a 351-run lead, delivered quick blows to reduce Chandigarh to 55/3 in 28 overs at stumps. Manvanth Kumar L picked up two wickets while Mohsin added another to his match tally.

Mohsin (8/114) showcased his class picking eight while Raghav Verma (6) and Sahil Kumar (0) were run out. Skipper Aarush Bhandari (63) was the highest scorer for Chandigarh.

Brief scores: Karnataka: 634/4 decl in 138.2 overs vs Chandigarh: (O/n: 98/3): 283 all out in 107 overs (Dushyant 59, Aarush Bhandari 63, Nikhil 31, Adhiraj 64 n.o.; Mohsin 8-114) & (F/o): 55/3 in 28 overs (Manvanth Kumar L 2-29).

BGS, Vivekananda in summit clash

BENGALURU, DHNS: Pratham Rao remained unbeaten on 99, while Akhilesh Pradhan claimed a fifer as BGS National School overwhelmed Presidency School, RT Nagar, by 123 runs in the semifinal of the KSCA Under-16 Schools (II Division) tournament for the KM Ramprasad Shield here.

Brief scores: School Vivekananda: 177 all out in 49.2 overs (Pranay Prakash 28 n.o., Dhruvesh 4-25, Shreyas S Gowda 3-50, Mitansh Singh Rao 2-23) bt Kensri School & College: 159 all out in 44.1 overs (Neil Santosh Honnagudi 35, Bhofinn Sanjeevareddy 30, Mitansh Singh Rao 29, Nakul R Sagar 4-28, S Lavith Nischal 2-29, Dhruv Acharya H 2-32, Bhumit Kumar 2-21).
BGS National Public School: 300/6 in 50 overs (Sai Rochan J 54, Pratham Rao 99 n.o., Vedanth Vedanarayanan 50 n.o.; Vishal Reddy SV 4-51, Varun Kumar MG 2-34) bt Presidency School, RT Nagar: 177 all out in 30 overs (Sathwik Rao V 47, Vishal Reddy SV 47, Varun Kumar MG 32 n.o.; Akhilesh Pradhan 5-35, Yaeesh Rahaman 2-7).

IN BRIEF

Anahat nearly pulls off an upset

▸ Rising Indian squash talent Anahat Singh nearly pulled off an upset before going down to Japanese world No. 7 Satomi Watanabe in the second round of the Sprott Tournament of Champions in New York, reports PTI from New Delhi.

Appearing in her first PSA Platinum-level event, the women's world No. 31 Anahat won the opening two games before the experienced Japanese sixth seed rallied to claim a 6-11, 6-11, 11-2, 11-8, 11-6 result.

Coyle returns as JFC coach

▸ Indian Super League club Jamshedpur FC have re-appointed England's Owen Coyle as head coach on a two-season contract, reports PTI from Jamshedpur.

The appointment of Coyle, who guided the Men of Steel to their historic ISL League Winners' Shield in the 2021–22 season, marked his return to JFC, the football club said in a statement here on Sunday.

◆ ON TV ◆

CRICKET

WPL: RCB vs Mumbai Indians **(7:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network**, **JioHotstar**.

U-19 WC: Afghanistan vs Sri Lanka, England vs Bangladesh, USA vs Scotland **(1 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Select 2**, **JioHotstar**.

FOOTBALL

EPL: Everton vs Leeds **(1:30 am, Tuesday)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Select 1**, **JioHotstar**.

La Liga: Girona vs Getafe **(1:30 am, Tuesday)**. **LIVE** on **FanCode**.

TENNIS

Australian Open: Singles Round of 16 **(6 am)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network**, **SonyLIV**.

HOCKEY

HIL: Third-place match **(6:15 pm)**, Final **(8:15 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network**, **SonyLIV**.

Giri gets the better of Gukesh

WIJK AAN ZEE (THE NETHERLANDS), PTI

World Champion D Gukesh suffered his second defeat in a row and third in the event, going down to local star Anish Giri (**in pic**) in the seventh round of Tata Steel Masters here.

On what turned out to be a tough day for Indians, Arjun Erigaisi found himself on the receiving end against Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus of Turkey who played a remarkable game to beat the world No. 5 and the top seeded here.

Aravindh Chithambaram also ended up losing with black pieces against another Dutchman Jorden van Foreest while R Praggnanandhaa was held to a draw by Matthias Bluebaum of Germany. With six rounds still to come in the 14-player 13-rounds event, Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan played his best game yet in the event to extend his lead by a full point.

The Uzbek defeated Germany's Vincent Keymer using black pieces to perfection.With Abdusattorov running away on 5.5 points, World Cup winner and his teammate Javokhir Sindarov remains his closest rival on 4.5 points.

Results (round 7): Jorden van Foreest (Ned, 4) bt Aravindh Chithambaram (Ind, 2); D Gukesh (Ind, 3) lt to Anish Giri (Ned, 3); Arjun Erigaisi (Ind, 3) lt to Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus (Tur, 4); R Praggnanandhaa (Ind, 2.5) drew with Matthias Bluebaum (Ger, 3.5); Vincent Keymer (Ger, 3.5) lt to Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb, 5.5); Javokhir Sindarov (Uzb, 4.5) drew with Hans Moke Niemann (USA, 4); Thai Dai Van Nguyen (Cze, 2.5) drew with Vladimir Fedoseev (Slo, 4)

Sainyam, Gaurav win trial 2 finals

NEW DELHI, PTI: Sainyam of Chandigarh and Gaurav Kumar of Uttar Pradesh came on top in the women's and men's 10m air pistol trial 2 finals respectively as the national selection trials 1 and 2 concluded here on Sunday.

World Cup final silver medallist Sainyam continued her good run of form, finishing on top in the finals with a dominant final score of 243.1, 5.4 points more than Rhythm Sangwan (237.7).

Meenu Pathak once again finished in the top three in the finals, finishing with a score of 218.5.

Earlier in the qualification, Suruchi Singh finished on top with an impressive 587-31x, but could only finish in eighth place in the finals.

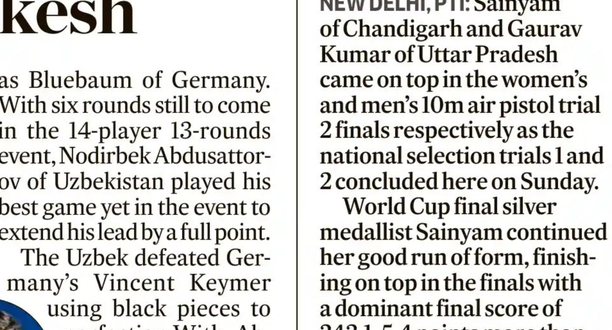
Palak shot 579-16x to finish second in qualification and shot 178.2 in the finals to finish fifth. Shwetha Singh took the third spot.

City's Ishaan claims National title

BENGALURU, DHNS

Bengaluru's 17-year-old schoolboy Ishaan Madesh and Pune teenager Sai Shiva Makesh Sankaran won the premier MRF Formula 2000 and Formula 1600 titles respectively as the fourth and final round of the MRF MMSC fmsci Indian National Car Racing Championship concluded at the Madras International Circuit in Chennai on Sunday.

Ishaan, the reigning National Karting champion, finished the weekend and the season with a triple crown as he overcame a stiff resistance from Pune's Arjun Chheda who finished runner-up in the championship standings. Sai Shiva won one of the three races to emerge National champion, sealing the title with a race to spare.



MRF F2000 race winner Ishaan Madesh (centre) flanked by second-placed Arjun Chheda (left) and Tarun MB.

Results (Provisional): MRF F2000: Race 2 (10 laps): Ishaan Madesh (Bengaluru) 21:00.736, 1; Arjun Chheda (Pune) 21:14.310, 2; Shivesh Selvarathnam (Bengaluru) 21:19.348, 3. **Race 3 (8 laps):** Ishaan Madesh 12:47.405, 1; Arjun Chheda 12:52.727, 2; Tarun MB (Bengaluru) 13:06.385, 3. **Driver Champion:** Ishaan Madesh.
MRF F1600: Race 2 (10 laps): Sai Shiva Makesh Sankaran (Pune) 21:56.732, 1; Nigel Abraham Thomas (Bengaluru) 22:02.561, 2; Arjun S Nair (Bengaluru) 22:04.050, 3. **Race 3 (8 laps):** Nigel Abraham Thomas 13:57.378, 1; Sai Shiva Makesh Sankaran 14:06.172, 2; Gyan S (Ben) 14:17.826, 3. **Driver Champion:** Sai Shiva Makesh Sankaran.
Indian Touring Cars: Race 2 (10 laps): Karna Kadur (Coimbatore) 19:15.138, 1; Biren Pithawalla (Mumbai) 19:25.275, 2; Arjun Balu (Coimbatore) 19:25.733, 3. **Race 3 (8 laps):** Arjun Balu 14:55.495, 1; Biren Pithawalla 15:09.053, 2; Rithesh Rai (Chennai) 15:15.953, 3. **Driver Champion:** Biren Pithawalla.
ITC 1625: Race 2 (10 laps): Nikanth Rambalu (Coimbatore) 20:22.211, 1. **Race 3 (8 laps):** Nikanth Rambalu 16:10.997, 1; Vidyaprakash Damodaran (Coimbatore) 16:11.924, 2. **Driver Champion:** Vidyaprakash Damodaran.
Indian Junior Touring Cars: Race 2 (10 laps): Deepak Ravikumar (Chennai) 20:03.408, 1; RP Raja Rajan (Chennai) 20:39.977, 2; Jarshan Anand (Chennai) 21:07.201, 3. **Race 3 (8 laps):** Viswas Vijayaraj (Nellore) 15:31.018, 1; Deepak Ravikumar 15:34.664, 2; RP Raja Rajan 16:10.218, 3. **Driver Champion:** Rithvik Thomas (Bengaluru).
Super Stock: Race 2 (10 laps): Anirudha Arvind (Chennai) 21:12.952, 1; Diljith TS (Thrissur) 19:24.991 +1 lap, 2; Deepa S John (Thiruvananthapuram) 19:37.628 +1 lap, 3. **Race 3 (8 laps):** Diljith TS 16:35.981, 1; Krishanu Dutta Bhuyan (Guwahati) 16:51.049, 2; Anirudha Arvind 16:55.613, 3. **Driver Champion:** Diljith TS.
Formula LGB 1300 (Open & Junior): Race 2 (10 laps): Bhuvan Bonu (Visakhapatnam) 21:44.649, 1; Aditya Patnaik (Navi Mumbai) 21:53.533, 2; Joel Joseph (Ernakulam) 21:54.505, 3. **Race 3 (8 laps):** Vinith Kumar (Tirupur) 15:09.078, 1; Lokithlingeash Ravi (Pollachi) 15:09.805, 2; Joel Joseph (Ernakulam) 15:10.039, 3. **Driver Champion (Open & Junior):** Joel Joseph.

MARUTI SUZUKI
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